

TOP STORY: THE HONORABLE SENATOR OLLIE NORTH?

June 27 - July 10, 1994

IN THESE TIMES



the alternative newsmagazine

SPECIAL

BUMMER VACATION ISSUE

Ten once-pristine getaway spots that have been environmentally devastated

\$2.50 / CANADA \$3.00



0 000000 0



Miles Harvey
page 14

EDITORIAL

THE ZAPATISTAS HAVE NOT BEEN BOUGHT OFF

In Mexico early this month, the Zapatista National Liberation Front demonstrated once again that it is that rarest of political organizations: one that puts principle before expediency. President Carlos Salinas de Gortari had offered a generous package of local reforms, including new roads and schools, new industries and job retraining programs, and even a continuation of land redistribution in Chiapas—two years after his government abrogated the Indians' constitutional right to land. But he did so as part of a strategy to split the peasants from what the *New York Times* calls "their more ideological leaders."

And he failed completely. Some 97 percent of Chiapas villagers voted against the government's offer, according to the rebel leaders. One reason Salinas failed is that the package of reform laws he proposed is still languishing in the legislature. Another is that the Indians are already being relegated to the back pages of the press and to the backwaters of political attention, even before an agreement has been reached. Acceptance would have made them invisible once again.

But the main reason for Salinas' miscalculation is that the Indians understand that gifts of roads, schools and even patches of land do not give them access to the levers of

*Salinas
assumed the
rebels in
Chiapas would
put expediency
before principle.
He was wrong.*

power in society. The promised reforms, Zapatista leaders argued, "will only postpone the problem if they do not take place within a new framework of political relations." So in turning down Salinas' offer, the Zapatistas insisted on talks about political changes at the national level as a condition of future negotiations.

This, of course, is just what Salinas and his Institutional Revolutionary

Party (PRI) do not want. They want to keep the dispute limited to Chiapas. Salinas' offers of land distribution and reform of the political and legal systems applied to Chiapas alone.

The Zapatistas know, however, that their demands are not just local, that most Indians and many other Mexicans are suffering from the monopoly of power held by the PRI and its corrupt wealthy leaders. When the Zapatistas rose up last January, they found supporters across the country. Demonstrations of solidarity and support continue even today. In the state of Oaxaca, hundreds of peasants recently blockaded state and federal offices in many towns and some 100 peasant farmers burst into the government palace in the city of Oaxaca, demanding justice, democracy and a

restructuring of high-interest farm loans.

Salinas and the PRI would like to see all this go away, but the movement for democracy in Mexico, like the Zapatistas themselves, is here for the long run.

JOHN JUDIS: FAREWELL BUT NOT GOODBYE

In 1969, 25 years ago this month, I met John Judis in Santa Cruz, Calif., and recruited him to work on a journal, now called *Socialist Review*, that a group of us were starting in San Francisco in an attempt to hold together what was best about the New Left, as vast sectors of it began disintegrating in a frenzy of self-destruction. In 1976, just a month after *In These Times* began publishing, John came to Chicago to be our foreign news editor. Since then he has worked with us as a political editor, senior editor and Washington correspondent. Now he is moving on to GQ, where he will write profiles of public figures.

All of us here at ITT respect and admire John's intellect and critical insights. Those of us who had the good fortune to know him well before he moved to the alien environs of Washington have a special affection and place in our hearts for him. He will be missed not only for his reporting and analysis, but also for his ability to infuriate some of us on the staff—as well as the many readers who loved to berate him in letters to the editor.

We wish John well in his new endeavors and hope that he will write for us in the future, as time permits and the spirit moves him. Meanwhile, we hope the impending gap on the letters page will be filled by readers enraged by the rest of us.

—James Weinstein

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
Managing Editor: Miles Harvey
Senior Editors: Patricia Aufderheide,
 David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil
Asst. Managing Editor/Books Editor:
 David Futrelle
In Person Editor: Joel Bleifuss
European Editor: Diana Johnstone
New York Editor: Daniel Lazare
Education Editor: Alex Molnar
Contributing Editors: Peter Karman,
 Ilan Stavans, Jim McNeill
Washington Correspondents:
 John Canham-Clyne, John B. Judis
Eastern Europe Correspondent:
 Paul Hockenros
For East Correspondent: Dave Lindorff
Film Critics: Pat Dowell, Patricia Aufderheide
Copy Editor: George Hodak
Types: Jim Rinnert
Editorial Interns: Jake Blankenship,
 Anastasia McRae, Shawn Neidorf,
 Edward Siskel, Rebecca Waugh

Art Director: Peter Hannan
Associate Art Director: Lisa Weinstein
Asst. Art Director/Photographer: David Schulz
Cartoonist: Terry LaBan

Publisher: James Weinstein
Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman
Assistant Publisher: Claudia Morris

Business Manager: Robert Larson
Circulation Director: Etelka Lehoczky
Advertising Director: Bruce Embrey
Office Manager: Theresa Nutall

(ISSN 0160-5992)

Published 26 times a year by the Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 772-0100. Member: Alternative Press Syndicate. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1994 by the Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues and volumes of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. Selected articles are available on 4-track cassette from Freedom Ideas International, 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$34.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). For customer service and to place subscription orders, call toll free: (800) 827-0270. Advertising rates sent on request. Available back issues are \$5 each; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 18, No. 16) published June 27, 1994 for newsstand sales June 27 - July 10, 1994.



InTHESETIMES

CONTENTS

Volume 18, Number 16



© TERRY LABAN

© SHIA PHOTO/IMPACT VISUALS

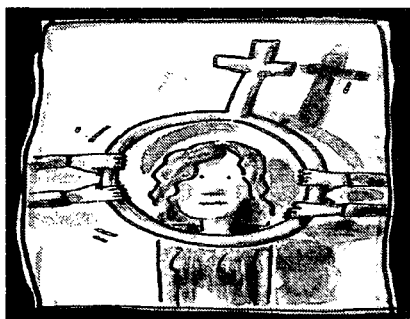
© PETER HANNAN

Oliver's army

The second coming of Ollie North.

ROBERT PARRY

19

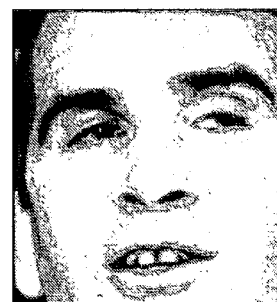


Bummer vacation

*A top ten list of
trashed travel spots.*

MILES HARVEY

14



Who stole feminism?

*Christina Hoff Sommers'
clueless detective work.*

LEORA TANENBAUM

32

FEATURES

- First Stone: The stateless nations** • Joel Bleifuss12
The military-political complex • John B. Judis22
Farrakhan's balancing act • Salim Muwakkil.....24
Nicaragua's fear of democracy • David R. Dye.....26
Education: Students teaching students • Frank Riessman.....28

REVIEWS

- Film: *Bhaji on the Beach* and *Go Fish*** • Pat Dowell.....30
Book: *Travels on the American left* • Scott McLemee35

DEPARTMENTS

- Letters**4
Sylvia • Nicole Hollander4
In Short6
Appall-O-Meter • Woody Igou6
Media Beat • Pat Aufderheide8
Rough Cuts • J.A. Reid9
In Person • Susan Kimmelman10
Etc. • David Futrelle.....10
Huge Mouth • Peter Hannan.....13
Classifieds37

LETTERS

Learning from history

You say, correctly, that "[t]he current Haitian ruling class, the police and the army are all creatures of an American policy designed to lock the vast majority of Haitians into their role as cheap labor for corporate investors" (Editorial, May 30). Why, then, do you call for a military solution that, history tells us, will be guaranteed to perpetuate this state of affairs? Why can't we learn that imported military solutions solve nothing? Why do we continue to impose them even over the objections of the very people we are purportedly trying to help? When will we accept the awful reality that, because democracy is antithetical to the needs of those corporate interests (which are always referred to as "our" interests),

our policy-makers will thwart democratic tendencies wherever they appear?

At least let us stop undermining the small flame of democracy that was sparked by the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Many branches of our government, as well as private interests, did their best to undermine it; in fact, a considerable amount of our tax money was used to do so through such agencies as the National Endowment for Democracy and elements of the CIA and the State Department. It was obvious from the beginning that our policy-makers had not expected Haiti's choice and were not happy with it. Our policy-makers were poised to have Haiti elect a "moderate" of our choosing, and it would seem we haven't given up hope of pulling that off. What on earth makes you think that a military invasion by our forces would have ensured their right to self-determination?

It's so sad to learn that one of our most enlightened publications has learned nothing from history.

Mary Shepard
St. Paul, Minn.

Bizarre?

It is standard operating procedure for the United States to intervene militarily and unilaterally in the affairs of Caribbean and Latin American countries, against the expressed wishes of other Caribbean and Latin American governments, against the wishes of the legitimately elected rulers of the countries to be invaded, and in violation of a range of international treaties.

But to have *In These Times*, which purports to be an "alternative news-magazine," support such an agenda ("Clinton's shot at a New World Order," May 30,) with respect to Haiti is a bit bizarre. What's alternative about that?

Martin Oppenheimer
Princeton, N.J.

Supreme egotism

I cannot believe your editorial stance of support for military intervention in Haiti. Certainly we have a special responsibility toward the people of that nation. However, it is not at all clear that the junta can be ousted only through military action, because the sanctions, diplomacy and Clinton's

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



avowed support for Aristide of the last year and a half have been a farce.

You fleetingly say, "even Aristide opposes it [military intervention]," but let's do it anyway. According to reports from human rights workers there, peasants, not surprisingly, don't want a military intervention, either (Pacifica Network News). What they desire is an airtight embargo (or, as some Haitians have told me, the notorious phone call from the Oval Office, "France will take you; liquidate your assets")—NOT the most recent "strengthening," wherein aristocratic families once again convinced Clinton not to freeze their assets or deny them visas (Ibid.). Why not impose sanctions on the Dominican Republic to stop the flow of petroleum over its border?

The real point is this: If one is truly committed to helping a group of people, one does not out of professed support commandeer the situation and patronizingly dictate the course of action, completely disregarding the wishes, first-hand knowledge and strategies of that indigenous population. What supreme egotism, and an indication to me that Clinton is most concerned with his own appearance. If we are truly committed to the majority peasant populace, the people, we ask them or their elected representative: What would you like us to do and how do you want us to do it? Then we respect their dignity and enact their wishes sincerely, not duplicitously, to the best of our ability.

Nan Kornfeld
Madison, Wis.

Editor's note: We have called for a U.N.-sponsored military action to depose the Haitian army and police, to be followed by an immediate withdrawal and a small multinational force to help establish a new police force under civilian (Aristide) control. On June 2, Aristide called for what amounts to the same thing. He said he has concluded that economic sanctions won't work, and that although the Haitian constitution does not allow him to formally invite military intervention, he would like to see "a surgi-

cal move to remove the thugs within hours," and then for the "international community" to come into the country within the framework of agreements already signed.

Bad conscience

When is Salim Muwakkil going to get it (ITT, May 16)?

Muwakkil may indeed be right—the self-appointed Nation of Islam (NOI) spokesperson, Khalid Abdul Muhammad, is an autocratic conservative in many ways. But it should come as no surprise, considering the rest of his gasconade.

All progressives wish that Muhammad were more articulate, less obfuscatory and would use his ebullience with greater tact and diplomacy. But that doesn't take away from the basic issue that was alluded to but not highlighted by Muwakkil—that the point is not the NOI's conservatism, their fusillade, or those confusing expressions from history and anger that are taken out of context by the mainstream media and seemingly deliberately convoluted. It is about what got them and Muhammad there in the first place—racism.

Muhammad is our conscience. And America prefers its conscience to be just a bit quieter and less obvious and less outspoken, so we can make it go away when it gets too close for comfort.

Don Sloan
New York

Proportional misrepresentation

You are quite right to suggest in your April 18 editorial in favor of proportional representation voting systems that more public discussion of their merits could strike a chord with millions of discontented voters now essentially disenfranchised in our outmoded winner-take-all system.

I am disappointed, however, that you neglect to mention organizations already working in favor of these pow-

erful reforms. In fact, the proportional plan for North Carolina's congressional delegation that you attribute to Lani Guinier—and which has sparked favorable attention in such publications as *The New Yorker*, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times*—actually was a product of the Center for Voting and Democracy, a national organization whose board and advisory board include such leaders as Dolores Huerta, John Anderson, Manning Marable, Eleanor Smeal and past and present Cincinnati mayors Theodore Berry and Roxanne Qualls.

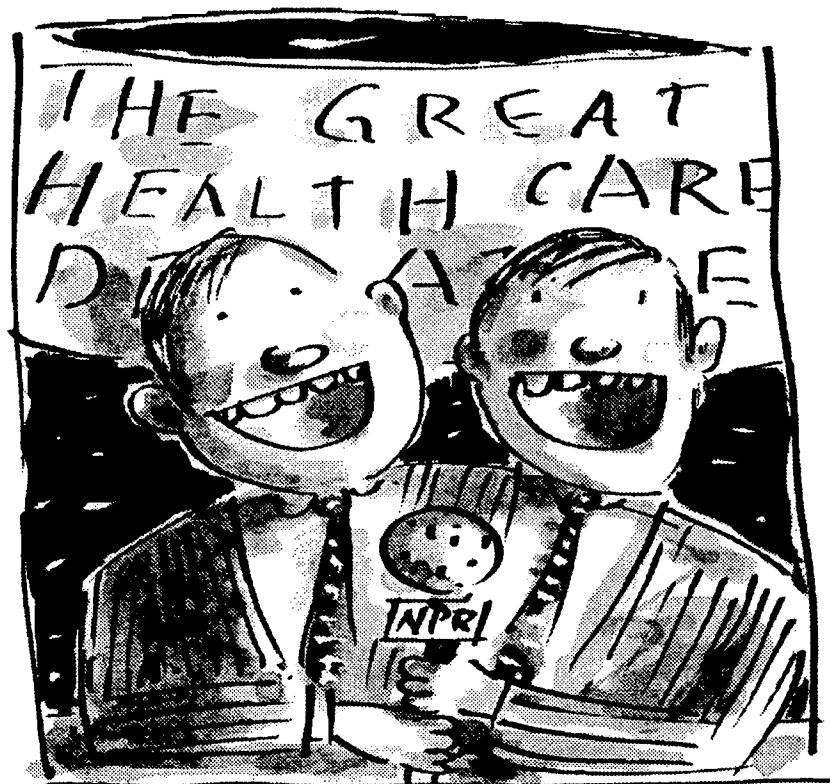
The center is pursuing a range of educational projects on voting system reform, while members have formed vibrant local organizations in such states as California, Washington and Massachusetts. For more information about bringing real democracy to the United States, please contact the Center for Voting and Democracy, 6905 Fifth Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20012, (202) 828-3062.

Rob Richie
National Director
Center for Voting and Democracy

Correction

"Unclean bill of health" from the June 13 issue contained incorrect estimates about the human cancer risk from dioxin. Peter Montague of the Environmental Research Foundation, who provided the estimates, misinterpreted the Environmental Protection Agency's draft reassessment of dioxin's dangers to be reporting annual risks, not lifetime risks. The draft portrays dioxin, at its current levels in the environment, as a likely cause of up to 3,500 new cancers each year, Montague now says, not up to 250,000. Thus, instead of causing as much as 25 percent of new cancers each year, as Montague suggested, dioxin is implicated, according to the report, in only as much as 0.35 percent of cancers. The other statistics reported for cancer risks and exposures in the article are correct.

InSHORT



©PETER HANNAN

NPR'S PHONY HEALTH CARE DEBATE

Listeners to National Public Radio's (NPR) "Morning Edition" were recently able to eavesdrop on a conversation about health care reform between two key strategists for the largest insurance companies in the United States. There was only one small problem: "Morning Edition" host Bob Edwards presented the March 8 discussion between former Minnesota Republican Rep. Vin Weber and former New York Democratic Rep. Thomas Downey as a debate.

While consumers of commercial news are accustomed to representatives of corporate power dominating the airwaves, in this case NPR listeners didn't even get competing corporate views. Both Weber and Downey work for Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Downey lobbies for Met Life, and has also represented U.S. Healthcare Inc., a huge, Pennsylvania-based HMO company,



By Woody Igou

A Priori Sales

Marketing executive Primo Angeli is promoting a new product sales concept—Rapid Access. Angeli notes that since "the package is the



product, why not first develop finished-looking packages with highly competitive brand and

product names. Test them with customers. Then turn the most effective packages over to R&D. Ask them to make a product that fits the pre-tested, pre-approved package." *We have become a race of crows, pecking at shiny objects.*

Fundamental sex

Outspoken Bangladesh physician/author Taslima Masreen is in hiding after receiving death threats for blasphemy against Islam. Among her crimes: she has been divorced



three times, she asserts that women (like men) should be able to have four spouses

and she advocates birth control. Mobs sought to hang her in the streets after she declared that the Koran was

"out of date." And in Turkey, Human Rights Watch has denounced governmental involvement in the longstanding cultural practice of inspecting young women for their virginity. The "searches," conducted in policy custody, have been forced on hospital patients, students and applicants for government jobs. Police have allegedly raped women in their custody and have frequently harassed unmarried women, accusing them of prostitution. Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, Turkey's first woman prime minister, has declined to comment. *How about them family values!*

Learning from Hitler

An official of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party, Yoshio Ogai, has written *Hitler's Election Strategy: a Bible for Certain Victory in Modern Elections*. The book, the cover of which is



decorated with a swastika and a picture of Hitler, advises that in these "chaotic times" people

can learn from Hitler. One chapter begins with a quote noting that Hitler's strategy was to "wipe out enemies with emergency measures." *At least ethnic cleansing is less of an issue in Japan.*

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Weightless banality
2. Green Acres stupid
3. Malicious cretinism
4. Howard Sternesque
5. Mary Matalin mean
6. Gangrenous venality
7. A touch of evil
8. A cancer in the Zeitgeist
9. Et tu, Pol Pot?
10. Horseperson of the Apocalypse

along with several pharmaceutical interests. Weber consults for the Alliance for Managed Competition, a trade group of the five largest private health insurers—including Met Life.

Alliance Members helped develop the theory of managed competition, which will probably be the underpinning of any health care reform bill passed by Congress. All have invested heavily in managed-care operations, and will reap huge profits from any system that forces people into HMOs or other preferred-provider networks. Like other corporate interests, they invest millions of dollars trying to influence Congress and the media when their financial interests are threatened by legislation. But even by Washington standards, controlling both sides of a "debate" on NPR represents a remarkable spin-control victory.

In its 1971 mission statement, NPR pledged itself to be a publicly funded alternative to corporate media, which would "promote personal growth rather than corporate profit." Yet, as the media watchdog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) documented in an April 1993 study, NPR's content is often distressingly indistinguishable from commercial media.

After *Legal Times* first exposed the sham debate between Weber and Downey, "Morning Edition" began vaguely identifying Downey as a "lobbyist" and Weber as a "consultant." But "Morning Edition" producer Ellen McDonnell questioned the necessity of these fuzzy labels. "Do you think," she asked *Legal Times*, "our audience is so naive that they think people trained in a specific line of work are now out there making pizza?" Apparently, NPR sees service in Congress as good training for corporate skills.

Herb Gunther, director of the San Francisco-based (non-profit) Public Media Center, believes McDonnell totally misunderstands NPR's relationship with its audience. Gunther's organization recently joined FAIR in placing a quarter-page ad on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. "Listeners Beware!" the ad warned. "Health Industry Buys Both Sides On National Public Radio."

NPR news editorial director John Dinges fired back in a June 8 letter to FAIR, agreeing that when NPR airs Weber/Downey discussions in the future, producers should make "clear references to their health care clients." However, Dinges "reject[ed]" as unwarranted FAIR's conclusions about the partiality of our coverage of the national health care debate." Dinges pointed out that Weber and Downey consumed a tiny portion of the "more than 840 on-air minutes" on health care that have run on "Morning Edition" since the introduction of the Clinton plan.

And, Dinges noted, Downey and Weber discussed health care only as one part of their overall contribution to the show, which is to provide "a lively liberal-conservative debate on a wide variety of issues."

The problem, says Jim Naureckas, editor of FAIR's magazine *EXTRA!*, is that Weber and Downey don't really debate much at all. "The striking thing about the Weber/Downey segments," Naureckas says, "is how devoid of content they are."

That's probably by design, according to Gunther, who charges that the insurance industry has deliberately confused the health care debate. "The media have done a terrible job, NPR included, of informing the public," says Gunther. "Polls show that the public is more confused about health care than they were when the debate started." According to Gunther, major corporate interests, especially insurers, "are playing on middle-class satisfaction and fear. By muddying the waters, they make anyone who thinks about the issue for a moment feel stupid."

—John Canham-Clyne

UPHEAVAL IN THE ISRAELI TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

It's called the the upheaval, or *Ma'hapakh*, and it feels like the 1977 general elections, when for the first time Israel's Labor Party lost control of the government. Last month the membership of the unions, or *Histadrut*, delivered the Labor Party another historic setback: 47 percent of the voters chose the "New List" of Haim Ramon and his supporters. This coalition includes the left-wing *Mapam/Ratz* bloc in the Knesset and supporters of the ultra-orthodox *Shas* party. In the *Histadrut* voting, Labor received 33 percent of the vote, the right-wing Likud got 16 percent and the Communist list got 4 percent. So, for the first time in its history, the *Histadrut* is not led by the Labor Party. What happened? And is it good for the workers?

The *Histadrut*, originally created more than two decades before Israel became an independent state in 1948, is a central component of Israeli society. But the leadership of the *Histadrut* is now aging and entrenched. Many of the institutions central to "Labor Israel"—including the *Histadrut* "sick fund," which provides health care to all of its members and thereby to most Israelis—have developed increasingly severe financial and structural problems.

Because of these problems, approximately 77 percent of all *Histadrut* "unified dues" went to pay the tab at the sick fund, leaving only 23 percent for all "other" trade union activities. And the health care system was running a massive debt that the government had to meet. Something had to happen.

That something was Haim Ramon. A 45-year-old Labor Party Knesset member, politically dovish, personally ambitious and a bit iconoclastic, Ramon proposed that the relationship between the *Histadrut* and the sick fund be changed. Currently, to receive its services Israelis have to be a *Histadrut* member or a direct relative. In recent years, an increasing number of new *Histadrut* members—including many recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Ethiopia and elsewhere—have joined simply to get health coverage. And, of course, this has added to the debt.

Ramon proposes a simple change: rather than *Histadrut* membership being a precondition for coverage by the *Histadrut* fund, all Israelis would be guaranteed a basic level of health care coverage from a fund of their choice, and the percentage of workers' paychecks going through the *Histadrut* would be collected by the National Insurance Institute (Israel's social security agency) directly and would contribute to the overall cost of health care. The rest of workers' union dues would continue to be collected by the *Histadrut* to finance the many activities of the Israeli trade union movement.

When Ramon, then minister of health, presented this proposal to the Knesset early this year, the Labor Party, under pressure from the *Histadrut* leadership, rejected it. So Ramon resigned from Yitzhak Rabin's cabinet and announced his intention to run an independent list in the *Histadrut* elections. The *Mapam* bloc, which had also been working for reform within the labor movement as well as for universal health care coverage, made a bid to run a joint slate in the elections. And the *Shas* party, which on issues of social equity is surprisingly close to the liberal-left, joined up as well.

Histadrut's traditional leadership, apparently caught unawares, launched a concerted, if unsuccessful, campaign against Ramon. Rabin attempted to persuade Ramon to "come back," realizing that change was coming, and coming fast. There was a massive advertising and poster blitz throughout Israel.

MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

The price tag, please

The Price Is Right has a touching respect for the traditions of our consumer culture. The new, improved game show, debuting this fall, features a nostalgia moment in which contestants guess the price of a product advertised in a commercial from TV's early history.

Say it ain't so, Joe

Joe Camel, the cartoon pitchman for cigarettes, long decried as a corrupter of youth, has been given a new lease on life. After spending three years mulling over citizen complaints that Joe Camel encourages young smokers, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has decided not to act on requests to ban the character. But when an FTC seat—currently held by a Republican appointee—turns over in September, Joe could once again come under close scrutiny.

How to succeed in showbiz

Want to direct a movie? Don't be a member of a minority, and try not to be a woman, either. That's the advice of the Directors Guild of America, which has just released a study showing that minorities continue to work only 4 percent of the total days worked in a year, a slight decline from a decade ago but a slight increase from 1991. Ominously, minority opportunities have declined far more dramatically for assistant directors. Meanwhile,

women's work time has grown since 1983 (but held steady since 1991), bringing the total to only 10 percent of the work days.

Life without fairness

When the Fairness Doctrine, which required broadcasters to air controversy and to do so fairly, was poofed into the ether by the Reagan-era Federal Communications Commission, conservatives championed a free ideas market, now liberated from the cramping effects of regulation. Of course, it never happened. Worse, even the tiny gestures toward open debate that were prompted by the doctrine have been abandoned.

For instance, many of the New York-area stations carrying anti-abortion commercials paid for by the Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation are refusing to carry counter-statements made by the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) of New York. NARAL, lacking the resources of DeMoss, is asking stations to carry the public-service announcement for free, as a balance to the DeMoss arguments. But so far most have declined. They just don't have to anymore. The doctrine is still, and seemingly perennially, up for legislative re-enactment.

And by the way...

A labor-oriented public TV series, *Shoptalk* (206-281-8901), now airs weekly in Tacoma, Wash., and is available to other public TV stations. Let your local station know your programming choices.

© 1994 Pat Aufderheide

Voter turnout was not only large—65 percent vs. 45 percent last time—but also sophisticated. While in the national *Histadrut* elections the Ramon coalition won decisively, in the parallel elections for the Israeli Association of Working and Volunteering Women, which is connected to the *Histadrut*, Labor won, with close to 55 percent of the vote, and the Ramon coalition trailed with 26 percent. Why? Because, while supporting reform of the health care system and some other progressive goals (such as peace with the Palestinians), *Shas* is still somewhere in the Middle Ages on issues of equal rights for women and the relationship between religion and state.

Some have posited that were it not for the Ramon coalition dissatisfied voters might have turned to the right, as they did in the 1977 general elections. But the direct opposite happened.

The socialist *Mapam* party reaped a victory in this election on several levels. *Mapam*, alone among its coalition partners, has been involved in *Histadrut* from the labor federation's earliest days. It is active in all workers' councils, and within the central structures of the labor movement's national bodies. It is linked to the kibbutz movement. It is also active in local workers' councils from the smallest village to the largest city, and has both Jewish and Arab Israelis among its ranks in a greater proportion than any of its coalition partners.

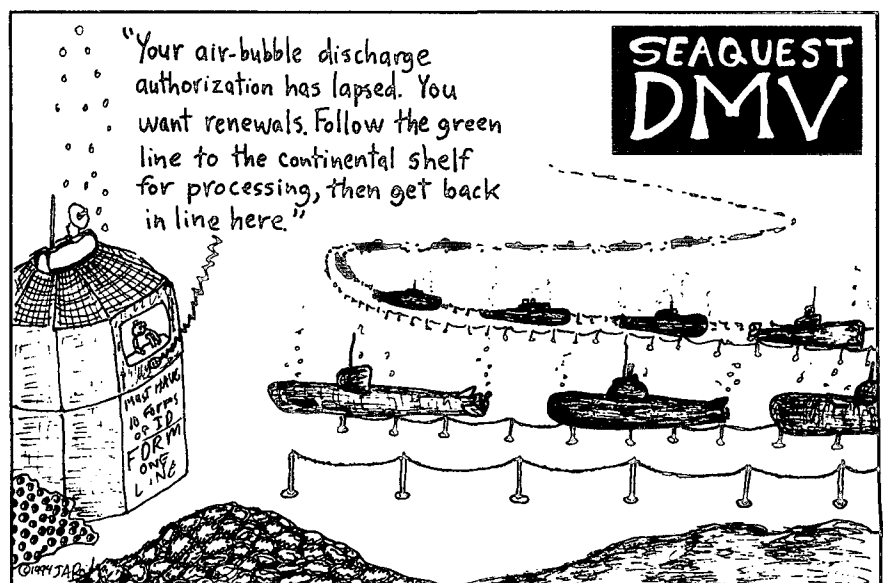
Mapam has enjoyed a renewal since its first independent campaign for the Knesset in 1988, after 20-plus years of alignment with Labor. For *Mapam*, this is a time of energy, excitement and change. Of course, people and forces are jockeying for positions of power, and there are perhaps a few shredders working overtime. The "Kremlin," as the *Histadrut* headquarters in Tel Aviv is affectionately called, has a truly massive bureaucracy, reflecting the role that the trade union movement plays in the life of Israeli society, economy and polity.

But a historic change has taken place. The new coalition has younger, newer faces and is bringing Israelis from various sectors into the leadership of *Histadrut*. The top three people on the winning list—Haim Ramon, Haim Oron of *Mapam* and Ran Cohen of *Ratz*—bring diverse experience, commitment to reform and constituencies that can breathe life into "Labor Israel."

—Arieh Lebowitz

ROUGH CUTS

By JA Reid



ETC.

By David Futrelle

IN PERSON



©DAVID SCHULZ

ART FOR
LIFE'S SAKE

*Dennis Mario Rivera's
declarations of independence*

Rivera, a Puerto Rican painter, printmaker, photographer and musician, is even more passionate about his art than his politics. "I will not surrender until I see my land free," he says, adding in the same breath, "Art is freedom. I am not married to ideology."

As a small child, Rivera pored over the sketchbooks his older brother hid under his bed. At nine, he knew he would be both an artist and a musician. He has never since wavered in his purpose, although his formal education was a

"Everything is politics in life," says Dennis Mario Rivera, a slender, handsome man who usually wears a cloth cap, a kind of abbreviated turban. "The jeans that you wear, the air you breathe, everything."

All the news

Connoisseurs of political scandal might do well to set aside the *American Spectator* and pick up the *Weekly World News*. The Florida-based tabloid, specializing in tales of the wildly improbable ("Woman's Lips Explode During Flight," "Vampire Attacks on the Rise"), has been beefing up its coverage with stories of political intrigue. The paper gained a certain degree of notoriety earlier this year when it disclosed that 12 U.S. Senators are in fact space aliens. And the revelations continue. The June 14 issue reports a brand-new Hillary scandal: "A secret and heavily censored White House memo that contains just three legible words—Hillary Clinton, nude and roller-skating—has been making the rounds of the press corps. To date, nobody in a position to comment will discuss it, reporters here confirm." (The editors are apparently using the method of word counting pioneered by Robert DeNiro's character in the film *Midnight Run*, who in a moment of anger told Charles Grodin that "I have just two words to say to you: Shut the fuck up!") In the June 21 issue, staff writer Rex Wolfe adds a new twist to the mystery of the Kennedy "assassination" by disclosing evidence that John F. Kennedy, still alive, secretly visited Jackie's grave days after her death, "in what some observers are calling 'the most touching 12 minutes in American history.'" And the *Weekly World News* has (blurry) photos to prove it.

Cultural violence

On a more serious note: The *Index on Censorship*, a magazine that has devoted itself to defending the right of free expression around the world, has recently reconfigured itself into a slick, thick *Granta*-esque journal. The May/June issue, the first in the new format, contains an interview with Umberto Eco about the rise of neo-fascism in contemporary Europe, Ronald Dworkin's artful skewering of "politically correct" arguments for censorship, as well as excellent articles on the war in the former Yugoslavia by Salman Rushdie and Dubravka Ugresic. Dworkin suggests that even the best-intentioned efforts to restrict speech may have dire, if not entirely unpredictable, consequences. "When we compromise on freedom because we think our immediate goals more important," he writes, "we are likely to find that the power to exploit the compromise is not in our hands after all, but in those of fanatical priests armed with *fatwas* and fanatical moralists with their own brand of hate." Rushdie and Ugresic offer eloquent protest against the ways in which the violent expedencies of war have been used as a justification for censorship and other, more subtle, forms of silencing. As Rushdie suggests, "[W]hen Western government spokesmen avow that culture is a luxury in wartime" they deny Sarajevo's humanity as effectively as any mortar shell. "[T]he fight for the survival of the unique culture of Sarajevo," he writes, "is a fight for what matters the most about our own."

troubled one. ("She hit me with a ruler, that motherfucker nun.")

Avenged by success, Rivera is now bemused by his lingering reputation as an *enfant terrible*. "You need a lot of bad boys like me," he says.

At 36, his life is a collage of places and professions. Six months of the year he lives in his hometown of Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico's second city. There he spends the summer with his "best friends"—his wife (an accountant) and their three children.

"Puerto Rico's beautiful," he says. "The light, the magic waters." Momentarily he looks wistful, but he's not a man given to second thoughts. He has chosen to "diffuse" his art, and, along with it, the story of Puerto Rico, "the oldest colony on the planet Earth." To that end he travels widely, taking his children with him when he can afford it and when school vacation schedules allow.

Music, Rivera's first love, doesn't pay—except in Paris, where he can trade on being "an exotic." Three months of each year he spends in Paris, playing percussion with salsa and Afro-Caribbean jazz bands. This city is his favorite, but as far as racism goes, he says Europe is no different than America. Rivera puts it this way: "Those in power say, 'We are white, and we are white. Take it or ... take it.' " He laughs without rancor. He reserves his anger for institutions and ideologies.

The last three months of the year Rivera spends in Washington, D.C., which he describes as a "boring" city and thus the perfect place to work. There he shares the "studio of my dreams" with a friend and compatriot. In the fall he is scheduled to hang a show at the Smithsonian.

Rivera's current show, which recently hung at Chicago's Museum of Puerto Rican History and Culture, is entitled "*Un Ofrenda de Color a Los Perseguidos*" (An Offering of Color to Those Who Are Persecuted), and is dedicated specifically to Puerto Rican political prisoners. The show includes two woodcuts that refer explicitly to the Puerto Rican nationalist struggle. One is a picture of Pedro Albizu Campos, the Harvard-educated hero of the Puerto Rican independence movement who spent much of his life languishing in North American jails.

Rivera likes to point out that from the British perspective, George Washington was also a terrorist. "For the United States, the American Revolution was glorious, but it's the only revolution they recognize."

In the woodcut, Campos is a small man in black, feet turned out in a pose reminiscent of Charlie Chaplin. In his shadow lies the disembodied claw of an American eagle, next to a red flower. Behind the figure of the man, on crossed black lines of electrical cable, perches a pitirre, a tiny bird of such speed and aggressiveness that it can defeat the giant eagle.

Another print, "The Magic Kingdom," is a complicated pastiche of images relating the recent and not-so-recent history of Puerto Rico. This includes a sinister portrait of the current Puerto Rican secretary of state with Mickey Mouse ears, taking a bullet through his brain—convicted by Rivera, although acquitted in court, of the 1979 murder of three young followers of the Puerto Rican independence movement.

In his next life, Rivera wishes to be an artist again, as he is sure he has been in all his many previous incarnations. Art is everything—refuge, shrine, passion and meal ticket. "The mother of my children is my lover," he says, "but art is my wife."

—Susan Kimmelman

THE FIRST STONE

THE DEATH OF NATIONS

By Joel Bleifuss

President Bill Clinton, in an address to the French National Assembly earlier this month, directed his gaze to the dangers facing the post-Soviet world. "Militant nationalism is on the rise, transforming the healthy pride of nations, tribes, religious and ethnic groups into cancerous prejudice, eating away at states and leaving their people addicted to the political painkillers of violence and demagoguery," he said. "We see the dark future of these trends in mass slaughter, unbridled terrorism, devastating poverty and total environmental and social disintegration."

Clinton believes he has discerned the way to an alternate future: free nations with free markets practicing free trade, freedoms that would be guaranteed internationally by agreements like GATT and by institutions like the U.N. Clinton makes a good point—in that further integration of the world economy will inextricably tie nations together, diminishing the chance of war. No small feat as the bloodiest century in human history draws to a close. Yet Clinton and his fellow free-trading statesmen, by settling for a *pax commercial*, have ceded control of the world economy to TNCs.

TNC is the acronym used by U.N. bureaucrats for transnational corporations. A more accurate term, I believe, would be "stateless nations." The larger of these stateless nations—such as Royal Dutch Shell, Ford, General Motors and Exxon—have economies that dwarf those of many nation-states. They are governed by elected representatives, chosen on the basis of the democratic capitalist principle of one share, one vote. Since stateless nations lack a geographic realm, their dominions include vast bank accounts, proprietary information, globally interconnected production sites and an army of mercenary workers.

The lifeblood of stateless nations is the free and open market. Apparently, the alternative to global free trade is earthly chaos. And so Clinton warned, with a reference to the former Eastern bloc, "If our new friends are not able

to export their goods, they may instead export instability."

In effect, under cover of the Western bloc's celebration of the Eastern bloc's fall, a quiet coup has been staged. And the birth of this new order has been accompanied by the demise of the only international attempt to regulate the behavior of stateless nations.

As journalist Carla Stea has reported, last year the U.N.'s Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations, which had been 15 years in the making, died a quiet bureaucratic death. And with it died the U.N. agency that was to oversee the code's implementation, the Center on Transnational Corporations.

The Center on Transnational Corporations was established by the U.N. in 1976, in the wake of two events that shook the world establishment. In 1973, the United States, with the support of U.S.-based International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT), orchestrated a coup against Chile's democratically elected government of Salvador Allende. This interference—by a stateless nation in the internal politics of a host nation—gave jitters to many developing countries. In 1976, it was the developed countries' turn to quake, when Libya expropriated oil wells belonging to the stateless nation of Occidental Petroleum.

So, the Center was established and the process of writing a Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations began. For the following 15 years the code was negotiated, and by 1992 almost all of the code's "brackets"—that is, language over which there was disagreement—had disappeared. And then the code itself disappeared.

Several factors contributed to its abandonment. The world of 1992 looked much more kindly on TNCs than did the world of 1976. Socialist ideals have been effectively discredited. In the Eastern bloc, communism collapsed under its own contradictions, while more promising social and economic initiatives in Nicaragua and Grenada fell to U.S.-staged counterrevolutions. Further, many developing nations have turned to investment by TNCs as the way out of their debt crisis, and find themselves in no position to challenge the supremacy of stateless nations by supporting regulatory controls.

Thus when the code was sent up to the General Assembly for approval, it was opposed by developing nations and industrialized nations alike. Wealthier nations, particularly the United States, were on principle against any code that would interfere with the free market.

For their part, the stateless nations, working through lobbyists and PR flacks, have staunchly opposed any global regulation. In this instance, they claimed that if the code were to be enacted, the Center on Transnational Corporations would turn into a watchdog commission that would then sanction and monitor the behavior of TNCs, in which case trade would no longer be free.

Indeed, the Center did fulfill one watchdog function for several years. From 1986 to 1991, the Center's environmental unit published a biennial list of drugs and chemicals banned in TNC home countries but not in other countries.

Harris Gleckman, the former chief of the environmental unit, remains "very pleased" with having helped develop "The Consolidated List of Banned and Severely Restricted Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals." He says, "I know of both drugs and pesticides [that have been] pulled off the market because of that list," including some in countries one would not "think of being in the forefront of health and safety," such as the Philippines, Indonesia and South Korea.

Between 1986 and 1992, the U.N. General Assembly voted three times to authorize the secretary general to release the Center's list of banned drugs and chemicals. Each time the authorization was supported by all U.N. members except the United States. The Reagan and Bush administrations voted against making the list public because they viewed it as an attempt to regulate the world market. How the Clinton administration would have voted will never be known, because there is now no list to vote against.

In the Center's place, the U.N. has established the Division on Transnational Corporations and Investment. This branch of the U.N.'s Conference on Trade and Development serves as a sort of chamber of commerce to encourage cooperation between stateless nations and nation-states. The notion that TNCs need to be regulated now seems quaintly dated. Says Gleckman: "When the Center existed, we had at our strength 60 professionals, but you are dealing with multinationals that control about one-third of the annual investment of the world. Sixty people could not do an adequate analysis of this phenomenon, and fewer can do less."

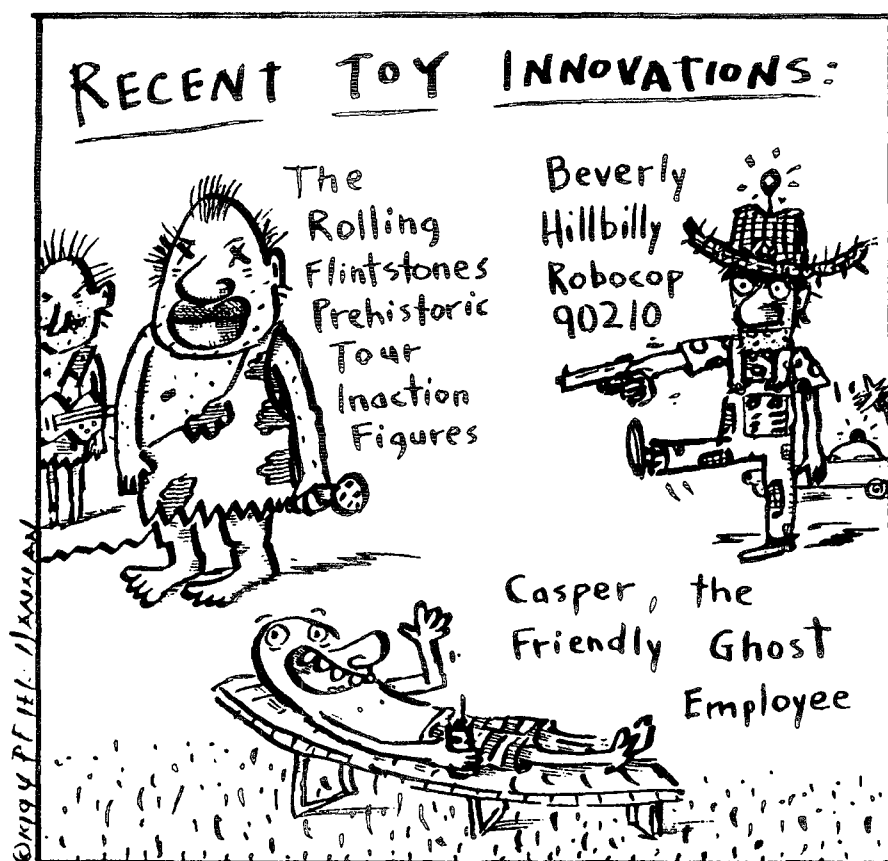
Gleckman is particularly concerned about the fastest growing sector of international trade, intra-firm trade, which is an unchecked development that he believes should be more closely monitored. Intra-firm trade occurs when a transnational company's subsidiaries trade goods among themselves—crossing state borders but remaining within the boundaries of the corporate state. The point is not so much to trade goods as to transfer money, allowing TNCs to take profits in and out of a country with no controls. This can serve as a powerful political weapon, since those who might wish to challenge the power of the stateless nations can find themselves constrained by the threat of capital flight.

And that brings up another part of the free trade equation: workers. While GATT prohibits countries from directly subsidizing industries, the agreement says little about the indirect subsidies that occur through the institutionalization of low-wage labor markets made possible by the suppression of union activity. The Clinton administration does at least view the rights of workers as part of the equation. Frances Williams reports in the London *Financial Times* that earlier this month, Labor Secretary Robert Reich told an International Labor Organization conference that those nations that place restrictions on union organizing should face the threat of sanctions. Reich went on to say that particular attention should be given to those countries where there has been a worsening of the position of low-wage workers and a widening of the gap between rich and poor. Such a situation, he said, would suggest a deliberate suppression of worker rights designed "to serve narrow commercial interests." Reich could have been referring to the United States, but he probably wasn't.

And though the United States may equivocate over human rights and workers' rights when free trade is involved, the administration has shown it can take courageous stands. Reich warned the world that slavery and the employment of very young children would not be tolerated. This is, after all, the New World Order. ◀

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



BUMMER VACATIONS

By Miles Harvey

The American landscape is increasingly covered with places where you wouldn't want to take your family—once-pristine vacation spots that have been decimated, by abuse or overuse, then forgotten in favor of new “getaways.”

Getting away is, of course, a deep-seated American desire. The first Europeans came to this continent for escape; then successive generations drove westward, always to get away. Today's corporations reflect this culture of transience—always jumping from one city or country to the next. Such greed-driven “getaways” are, of course, responsible for much of the degradation of our environment. But the fundamental impulses of the corporate polluter and those of the nature-lover are often not as far apart as we'd like to think.

Manifest destiny lives on in our belief that we have an inalienable right to trod upon, drive through, boat across, swim in, climb over or fly above any public area in the United States. Even many of those who loudly denounce a logger's right to be in a forest never question the appropriateness of *their own* presence among those same trees.

That's not to say that we shouldn't experience and enjoy the natural world. But we must stop treating destinations as disposable commodities—as the following cases tragically illustrate.

1. Everglades National Park

If you were at the Everglades 20 or even 10 years ago, you might well have been struck by the crystal-clear waters of Florida Bay, which lies at the south end of the park. Past visitors remember seeing straight to the bottom—even at a depth of 50 feet. “It was an almost magical experience to be out on Florida Bay under pristine conditions,” recalls Joyce Newman, the Florida Keys coordinator of Clean Water Action.

Now the magic's gone. In its place is the Dead Zone. Writing in a recent issue of *Outside* magazine, Joy Williams describes the Dead Zone as “a spreading area of massive turtle-grass die-

off that has fueled an algae bloom that either kills or drives away marine life. It's death soup.”

The Dead Zone, the result of a healthy estuary being transformed into a hyper-saline lagoon, is just one of the park's many ecological nightmares, almost all of which are attributable to government folly and corporate greed. In 1949, Congress initiated

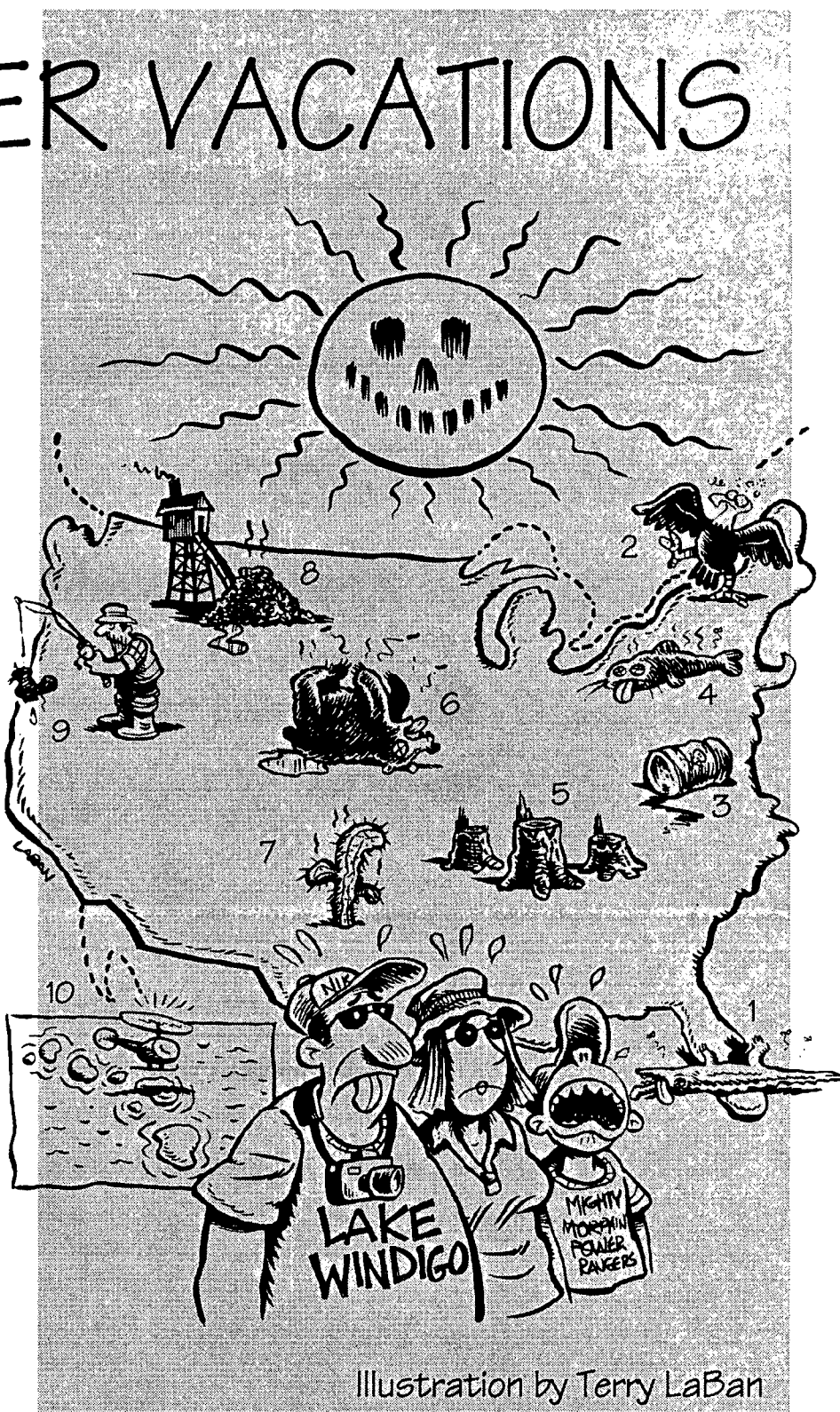


Illustration by Terry LaBan

an Army Corps of Engineers flood-control project that created a huge agricultural area bordering Lake Okeechobee on what had formerly been the northern end of the Everglades. The idea from the start was to suck much of the Everglades dry—and the system has worked all too well. Not only did the project drain the Everglades of its lifeblood—fresh water—but it also led to massive runoff of agricultural chemicals that has wreaked further havoc on the ecosystem. The Army Corps project also encouraged the big postwar population boom in southern Florida, which has led to even more fresh-water diversion from the Everglades.

As a result, Williams writes, “Everglades National Park, which millions of people visit and perceive to be the Everglades, comprises only 20 percent of the historic Everglades and is but a pretty, fading afterimage of a once outstanding ecosystem. Ninety percent of the wading-bird population has disappeared, and now ‘one of the rarest places on earth’ ... has become a horror show of extirpated species; on land, a water park with no water; at sea, a sick marine estuary turning into a dead lagoon.”

2. New England's lakes and ponds

New England's fresh-water retreats—the rustic vacation areas of *On Golden Pond*—face a new threat that's likely to emerge as a major environmental issue in the '90s: mercury pollution. The most likely culprits are fossil fuels and waste incineration plants.

Just weeks ago, Maine issued the nation's strongest health advisory yet about the dangers of elevated levels of mercury. Government officials are warning women of childbearing age and children under eight not to eat any fish from any of the state's nearly 5,800 ponds or lakes. Other Maine residents are being told to restrict their consumption to no more than six large fish or 22 small ones annually.

Environmentalists are praising Maine's strong warning, and criticizing other New England states for glossing over the problem. But mercury contamination is hardly limited to New England. In the Everglades area, for example, high levels of mercury have been found in fish and in endangered Florida panthers. In

all, 31 states have issued health advisories about mercury in fish, according to an article in the May 26 *Boston Globe*, which quotes an EPA official as saying, “The states that don't have advisories probably haven't looked” for the problem.

Mercury stunts development of the brain and nervous system, lowering intelligence and damaging hearing, speech and coordination. And it “biomagnifies” as it moves up the food chain. Large predator fish can carry mercury concentrations in their flesh up to a million times higher than those found in water. These fish—such as trout and largemouth bass—are the ones most prized by recreational fishing enthusiasts.

But while New England vacationers can choose to release their catches, other animals—including the region's legendary loons—are dependent on fish for their diet. Officials in Maine, for example, have discovered high levels of mercury in young bald eagles. Some scientists worry that the mercury is already showing its effect on the birds, causing an apparent increase in the number of eagles that kill themselves by flying into things. “You wonder why that would happen to a bird that has such keen eyesight,” says Barry Mower of Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

Mower says that most experts believe the increased levels of mercury are “not from natural causes.” Nor do they appear to be from direct discharges into the water. “We're finding mercury all over the place: in the so-called ‘pristine’ Maine North Woods, for example, there never have been direct discharges. There's nothing up there but trees.”

That means coal-burning power plants and waste incinerators are causing most of the damage. Lee Ketelsen of Clean Water Action in Boston thinks New England's mercury threat will make tourists “feel differently about the place that they're vacationing in. And I think it's good that people realize they can't have their batteries incinerated in Massachusetts and then go up to Maine for a pristine environment.”

3. Alcyon Lake

In the first half of this century, Alcyon Lake was the site of a popular recreation park for Philadelphians. Located just 15 miles outside the city in Pitman, N.J., the scenic little lake boasted summer cottages, a boardwalk, a bowling alley, a bathhouse, a merry-go-round and other rides, as well as boating, canoeing, fishing and swimming.

The park's heyday passed with World War II, but Alcyon Lake remained a vital recreation area for local residents. In 1958, however, things began to take a turn for the worse. The Lipari landfill was opened upstream from the lake on the site of a sand and gravel pit. The dump soon became a favorite of chemical companies.

In 1971, the landfill ceased operation due to health and safety concerns, but by that time toxic pollutants had been seeping into the lake for years. Twelve years later, the federal Environ-



mental Protection Agency (EPA) ranked the landfill No. 1 on its National Priorities List. This summer, the final phase of the cleanup—paid for, under EPA order, by former landfill users—is scheduled to begin. Project managers hope to complete their work by December 1995.

The EPA claims that the cleanup will enable Alcyon Lake to become once again safe enough for swimming. But Lois Gibbs of the Citizens' Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste is skeptical. She's particularly concerned about a plan to heat soil dredged from the lake in order to remove organic contaminants. "In the process of heating, the likelihood of toxins going into the air is pretty high," she says. "Most places like Alcyon Lake don't ever get fully cleaned up."

4. The St. Lawrence River

For recreational fishing enthusiasts, the St. Lawrence River, running between Canada and upstate New York, was once a great place to catch muskie, walleye and bass. But for members of the Akwesasne Mohawk nation, the river meant much more than that.

Not only did tribe members earn money by running a fishing camp, serving as guides for recreational anglers and working as commercial fishermen, but fish from the river also provided a main source of food for the Akwesasne people. Moreover, the river has also been central to Mohawk culture and religion.

In the '60s, however, Mohawk fishermen began to discover that many of the fish they caught were marked by open sores. It



soon became apparent that something was terribly wrong. State and federal officials later determined just what: polychlorinated biphenyls, more commonly known as PCBs. It turned out that three companies—owned by General Motors, Reynolds Metals

and the Aluminum Company of America—had dumped thousands of pounds of PCBs into the St. Lawrence and its tributaries.

The region's recreational fishing industry screeched to a halt. "When word got out that the fish were contaminated, the fishermen didn't come," explains Ken Jock, environmental director for the tribe. "People lost their businesses within a matter of a year or two."

With no other source of income, many families turned to smuggling liquor, cigarettes and drugs across the river to Canada, according to Keith Schneider of the *New York Times*.

A massive cleanup, which could cost polluters up to \$500 million, is scheduled to begin this summer.

5. Shawnee National Forest

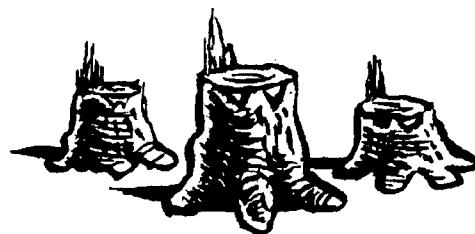
For centuries, songbirds have traveled from their winter homes in Mexico and Central America to the hardwood forests of the Ohio Valley. There, wood thrushes, scarlet

tanagers, summer tanagers and other species such as the yellow-throated warbler have found safe havens for breeding under the forests' canopies.

But birdwatching isn't what it used to be at the Shawnee National Forest in southernmost Illinois. Studies indicate a 72 percent decline in the state's songbird population over the last decade. Much of the demise, experts claim, stems from ill-conceived—and sometimes absurd—forestry practices at Shawnee.

Already sliced up by "inholdings" (interior parcels of private development), Shawnee has been further dissected by clearcutting. "When you fragment forests into small islands surrounded by logging clearcuts, farmland and suburbs," Dartmouth biologist Richard Holmes recently told *National Geographic*, "nesting songbirds are left vulnerable to predatory grackles, raccoons, snakes and house cats that haunt the woodland edge. Plus, of course, cowbirds."

Cowbirds, which also inhabit the edges of woodlands, lay their eggs in the nests of songbirds—then fly away. Most songbirds are



unable to tell these eggs—or newborn cowbirds—from their own, and end up feeding bigger and hungrier cowbird chicks while the young songbirds starve to death.

The tragedy is made worse by the fact that the government has actually been *losing money* on the clearcuts. As at other national forests, the Forest Service at Shawnee has engaged in "below-cost" timber sales. The Forest Service actually spends more money building roads for the logging companies than it receives from those companies for the right to cut the trees. According to Jan Wilder-Thomas, director of the Shawnee Defense Fund, Washington has lost an average of \$1 million per year on such sales in Shawnee.

Wilder-Thomas has launched a campaign to push President Clinton to sign an executive order declaring Shawnee a "songbird national monument," based on its scientific value. The order would end destructive forestry and industrial practices in Shawnee—a good thing for songbirds, vacationers and taxpayers alike.

6. Targhee National Forest

Decades of clearcutting have also created a complex series of problems at the Targhee National Forest on the western border of Yellowstone National Park. The forest has long been a favorite location of elk hunters, who descend on Targhee when the elk pass through it during their annual migration season in the fall. But in recent years, elk hunting in Targhee has been greatly scaled back.

Much of the problem, according to Dick Schwarz of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, is due to hundreds of miles of roads that were built to accommodate timber removal at Targhee. The roads have made the hunters' task too easy:



instead of having to hike into the forest to find the elk, hunters can now engage in what amounts to deep-woods drive-by shooting. And with the elk's natural cover decimated by clearcutting, the scales have been

tipped against the elk—especially the bulls.

The roads are also harmful to grizzly bears, which are declining in the area. Roads hurt grizzlies by displacing the bears from their habitat, fragmenting that habitat and increasing human-bear interactions.

This year the Forest Service reached a settlement with 11 environmental groups that had sued Targhee in an effort to save the bears. As part of the settlement, the Forest Service is now hoping to close 300 miles of roads in Targhee. Many local residents, however, object to the proposed closing. They want to keep the roads open for recreational uses—such as hunting elk.

7. Black Mesa

Tourists on their way west to the Grand Canyon often swing through the Navajo and Hopi reservations, renowned for their beautifully stark desert landscape. In recent decades, though, the mesa country has also been home to the largest strip mine in North America. For those passing through the region, the mine areas, run by the Peabody Western Coal Co., are an eyesore, a dramatic reminder of the ways in which humans tamper with the environment. But for Hopis and Navajos, the Black Mesa mine is “a living hell,” according to Will Collette of the Citizens Coal Council.



It's not that the Indians don't profit from the mine. According to a recent *Washington Post* report, the Hopis alone reap about \$10 million a year in coal royalties plus about \$1.5 million a year for water. These payments constitute about 80 percent of their tribal budget.

Even so, tribal officials now say they made a big mistake in allowing Peabody to share their water. The Hopis, who have lived in the region for more than 2,000 years, fear that the underground lake that has

always supplied them with water is drying up. They blame it on Peabody, which uses more than a billion gallons of water per year to transport pulverized coal through a pipeline to a Nevada electric plant. The Hopis are asking Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt to deny the company a renewal of its operating permit, thus forcing Peabody to find a different way of transporting the coal. If Babbitt balks, Collette says, the only issue remaining will be how many years of water are left.

The Navajos, meanwhile, have been challenging Peabody's

compliance with federal mining laws on issues such as blasting and dust. “The view of the canyons and mesas is not enhanced by clouds of coal dust and smoke from explosions,” says Collette.

8. Coeur D'Alene River basin

Idaho's Coeur D'Alene River basin sits in one of the most beautiful regions of America. That fact notwithstanding, it is arguably the site of the worst heavy-metal pollution in the world. From the late 19th century until the 1980s, the area, known as Silver Valley, was one of the most heavily mined spots on the globe. The mines are mostly gone now—what remains are 72 million tons of poisonous mining wastes, including lead and mercury. (See *In These Times'* cover story, “Private Idaho, public disaster,” Feb. 26, 1992.)

The federal government has set up a Superfund site, but much of the problem remains outside the borders of the cleanup area. Take, for example, the river itself. Between the 1880s and the 1960s, an estimated 72 million tons of mine waste flowed down the river system and into Coeur d'Alene Lake, according to the *Washington Post*. Even today, with most of the mines closed, an estimated 900 pounds of heavy metals a day enter the river system.

Somehow, that hasn't slowed the throngs of tourists who still use the river for fishing, swimming, picnicking, hunting and bird watching. “Literally tens of thousands of people come here monthly to fish and swim, and pay no mind at all to the pollution. It never enters their minds,” says Jess Marratt, clean lakes coordinator for the Coeur d'Alene tribe, whose reservation sits in the heart of Silver Valley. “You know, the banks are orange and yellow and blue from the different metals, and these people just don't notice.”

It's not yet clear what the long-term health effects for these vacationers will be. But grim numbers are coming in on another set of tourists to the area: lead contamination has killed an estimated 7,000 tundra swans.

9. The Columbia/Snake River system

Better bring the Mrs. Paul's along on your next salmon fishing adventure in the Pacific Northwest. You're not likely to be able to catch your dinner.

For the first time in history, there will be no commercial and charter season this summer, due to the dwindling populations of coastal coho and threatened species from the Columbia/Snake River system.

As for recreational salmon fishing in the ocean, “there are going to be only a few one- or



two-day openings," explains Tim Stearns of the Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition. "We used to have the whole summer." And the same kind of restrictions will apply during river-fishing season this fall.

Central to the problem is the fact that the Columbia/Snake River system, long legendary for its salmon runs, has lost well over 90 percent of the wild salmon that once spawned there. Hydroelectric dams are the biggest reason for the decline. From the '30s to the '70s, 19 federal dams were built along the river system. These dams have greatly altered the system's natural flow.

For centuries, the Columbia/Snake River basin has served as a vital part of the delicate life-and-death cycle of salmon. Each year salmon come in from the Pacific Ocean to drop their eggs and die; in the spring, river floods known as freshets carry young salmon back out to sea. The dams, however, have all but eliminated these freshets.

Environmentalists argue that the problem can be solved by modifying some dams and by better managing the flow of water at dams and reservoirs during peak migration times for wild salmon.

But hydroelectric power isn't the only threat to the Northwest's salmon population. Destructive grazing, mining and farming practices are also to blame. And then there's clearcut logging. "Scientists and economists now tell us that if the ancient forests are lost, there's a good chance a majority of the salmon stocks in the Pacific Northwest will be gone too," writes former President Jimmy Carter in *USA Today*. Carter explains that "[o]ld growth is the anchor of healthy salmon streams, providing permanent sources of stability, shade and nutrients."

10. Haleakala National Park

In Hawaiian legend, the demigod Maui climbed the great mountain Haleakala in order to snare the sun. He released it only after it promised to move more slowly across the sky.

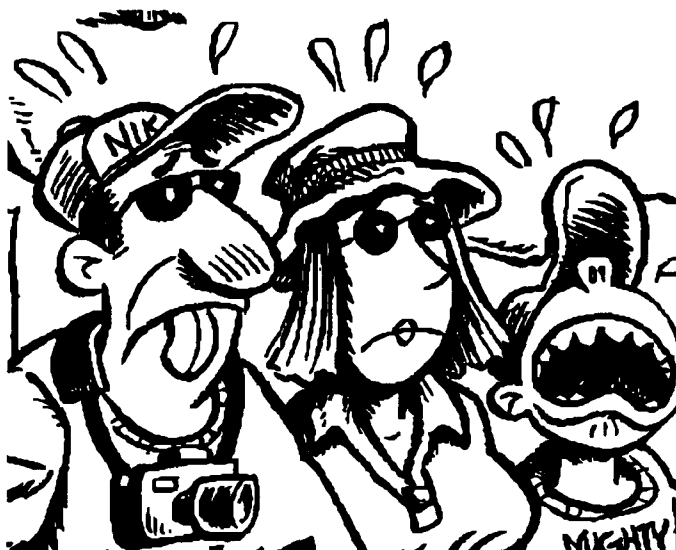
But the sun has proven easier to slow than the frenzied island tourists, many of whom are so busy vacationing that they can't find the time to actually set foot in the park, home of one of the world's biggest dormant volcanoes. Instead, huge herds of travelers are opting for hit-and-run flyover tours. The mythic "Mountain of the Sun" has been transformed into the Hill of the Helicopter. Haleakala—long characterized by what one visitor

describes as a "huge silence"—now sounds like a 12,000-foot-high food processor.

Sadly, Haleakala is far from being the only national park subject to such aural air raids. Planes and helicopters buzz hikers and disturb wildlife in 111 parks throughout the country, according to

can be heard for 45 minutes of every daylight hour. And in the Smokies, air-tour brochures boast that their planes and choppers will penetrate even the most remote areas of the park.

The Federal Aviation Administration and the National Park Service recently announced their joint intention to propose new federal regulations governing where and when commercial tour operators can fly over national parks. The NPCA is pushing for immediate bans of some flights and phaseouts of others. The air-tour industry, of course, has different ideas. It wants the Clinton administration to impose voluntary or industry-regulated controls. Will the administration once again say all the right things and do all the wrong ones?



The real question, however, is not about how to best regulate helicopter sightseeing, but about why travelers feel impelled to engage in such endeavors. What's the point of visiting, say, the Smokies if you're not going to touch the cold stones, smell the pine needles, feel the sting of sore muscles at the end of a long day's hike along the Appalachian Trail? You might as well stay home and watch nature shows on public television.

And maybe that's not such a bad idea. More than a century ago, Henry David Thoreau warned his fellow Americans against traveling. "The man who is often thinking that it is better to be somewhere else than where he is excommunicates himself," he wrote.

His words ring truer than ever. Because our everyday lives have become so alienated from the natural world, we now claw at it in increasingly desperate and destructive little bursts—charging across the Everglades' troubled waters by boat, swerving through the Grand Canyon's airborne traffic jam by plane. Perhaps the time has come to vacation at home, discovering, like Thoreau, the beauty in our own lives and communities.

Of course, that's not always easy. A few months back, Massachusetts officials put Thoreau's beloved Walden Pond on an environmental warning list. The pond's fish, it seems, have abnormally high levels of mercury. ◀

Edward Siskel and Rebecca Waugh contributed extensive research to this story.



the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA), a group working to protect U.S. parks. In parts of Grand Canyon National Park, for instance, the drone of planes and helicopters

POLITICS

Oliver's army

O

Thanks in large part to the failures of the Democrats, Oliver North is back.

By Robert Parry

llie North spoke with the same husky voice, still cracking with well-timed emotion. Flashing his trademark gap-toothed grin, he delivered the same mock heroism that always sounded too corny to work but somehow did. Now, however, he wasn't facing down terrorist Abu Nidal, *mano a mano*, or vowing to tell the full Iran-contra story—"the good, the bad and the ugly." North was talking tough about ridding the country of liberal Democrats, of a Clinton White House filled with "twenty-something kids with an ear-ring and an axe to grind."

Thanks largely to the failure of both the Democrats and the Washington press corps to explain the Iran-contra scandal to the American people, retired Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North is back. Despite divisions in the GOP, North has a fighting chance to

secure the Virginia Senate seat now held by scandal-scarred Democrat Charles Robb.

At the June 4 state convention, North won the GOP nomination and lit up Richmond's Coliseum. Before 14,000 cheering Virginians—nearly all of them white—North looked tanned and fit. He was no longer the talented amateur who burst onto the American political stage as the unapologetic star of the congressional Iran-contra hearings seven years ago. Now, reading his lines smoothly from a TelePrompTer, North appeared a well-drilled political combatant, battle-ready for his second assault on Congress.

With characteristic hyperbole, North likened his scrappy fight for a Virginia Senate seat to the desperate D-Day battle of GIs who crawled across Omaha beach and scaled cliffs to dislodge entrenched German forces 50 years ago. "But this time," North told the hushed auditorium, "the beachhead we need to seize isn't on some distant shore. It's just across the Potomac River in Washington. This time, our adversary isn't some foreign tyranny. It's the arrogance and power of a

new nobility in our nation's capital. This time, there's only one hill that we have to take: Capitol Hill."

But North, a Christian fundamentalist, made clear that his Senate beachhead would be only a staging area for him and his onward-marching Christian Right foot soldiers. Soon, they planned to break out for wider political conquests—in particular, the conservative offensive to liberate the White House in 1996.

"Today, we send the Clintons and their cronies a simple but unmistakable message," boomed the charismatic Charismatic. "This is our government. You stole it and we are going to take it back."

With good reason, the far right hopes that the telegenic North, now 50 years old, can pick up the national banner from the aging Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) and lead the conservative movement to even greater victories. Having known North since 1983, when I met him while reporting on the wars in Central America, I have no doubt that he can do it. North, a man who intuitively understands the nation's insecurities and resentments, has within him the seeds of a genuine American demagogue. Like Ronald Reagan, his genius is an uncanny ability to adopt the role of the populist underdog, even when he holds enormous power and his adversary is pathetically weak.

Relying on those remarkable public relations skills, Reagan and North could, rhetorically, transform impoverished Nicaragua or tiny Grenada into dangerous threats to U.S. national security. They could make the mainstream Washington news media look like liberal bullies when, in fact, reporters spent the '80s "on bended knee," as media critic Mark Hertsgaard has so aptly noted.

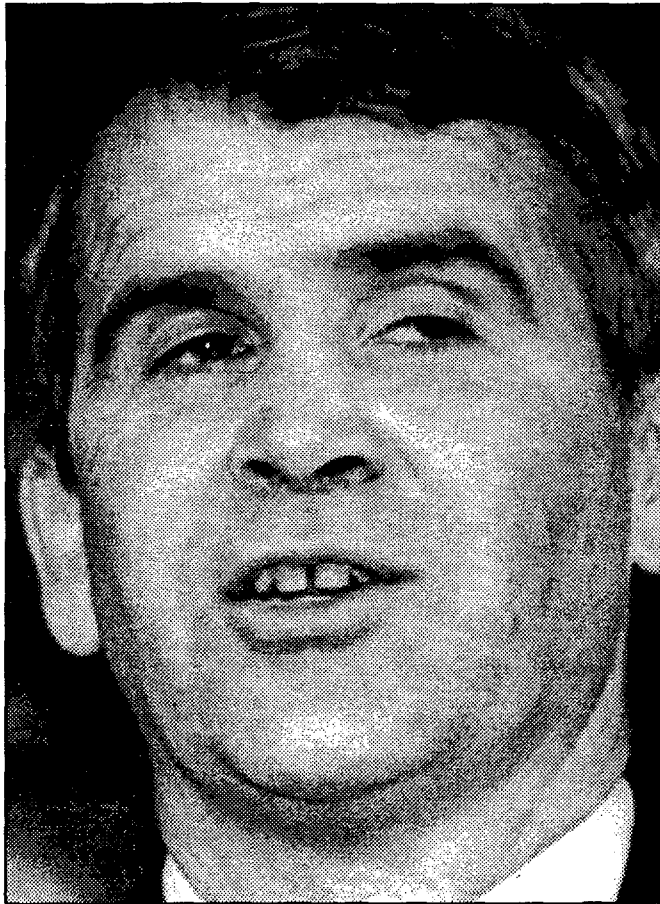
Perhaps most amazing of all, Reagan and North could recast the national Democratic Party as an all-powerful liberal elite, instead of a bumbling circus troupe of political acrobats. The fall election will test North's striking ability to tap into the deep but muddy reservoir of American populism. The Richmond speech offered a preview. "To those who look to their hearts in this battle, I am your man," he rasped, with an understated passion and a catch in his throat. Then, his voice laden with sarcasm, he thundered: "Clinton, Congress, Koppel and above all, Chuck [Robb], we'll beat 'em all like a dozen eggs."

When North's speech ended, blue and white balloons cascaded down. His supporters were delirious. They filled the auditorium with shouts of "Ollie, Ollie" and rallied to the upbeat tune, "Eye of the Tiger."

Later, as some of the Republican districts caucused, the gathering was kept jumping by a Bob Roberts-like rock group, called the Angry Young Pachyderms. The lead singer, a right-wing caricature of the Talking Heads' David Byrne, promoted the group's songs as very "politically incorrect." The Pachyderms' angry numbers included "Dumbed-Down Edumacation," "A Full-Blown Liberal," and "Unfunded Mandate."

Still, the musical hit of the afternoon may have been the lusty rendition of "Dixie," the battle song of the slave South. Looking around at the throng, I first thought I would be embarrassed to encounter a black Republican who might have found the choice of music offensive. Then, I realized that there was nary a black person in sight. Having a nearly segregated political convention in the capital of the old Confederacy and playing "Dixie" showed just how "politically incorrect" these new Republicans dared to be.

"Political incorrectness" was the theme, too, in the corridors surrounding the convention hall. Conservative entrepreneurs hawked a wide variety of hate-Clinton and hate-liberals paraphernalia. Some of the milder buttons recommended only Clinton's impeachment. Others urged the appointment of Dr. Kevorkian as White House physician. Many buttons and bumper stickers sought to keep alive the more lurid Clinton scandals. One read, "I believe Paula" referring to Paula Jones' bizarre legal complaint that Clinton



exposed himself to her in 1991. Another asked one of Rush Limbaugh's favorite questions, "Who Killed Vince Foster?"

Nearby, for \$5, you could get two rolls of toilet paper, one printed with Bill's likeness and the other showing Hillary as a puppet-master and Bill as a puppet. They are suitable as novelty gifts, the vendor told me, or for actual wiping. Picking up the recurring Bill and Hillary themes were T-shirts with Bill saying "I feel your pain" and Hillary saying "I am your pain."

At one table, the bumper stickers looked particularly strange and nasty. One rephrased the old liberal dream of "visualize peace." That was changed to "visualize no liberals." I asked the white vendor with close-cropped hair what group he was with. He answered with

a slight stutter, "the Fourth Reich." When I stopped speechless, he added with a chuckle, "Oh, it's not what you think."

Though expecting major gains in the 1994 elections, these post-Cold War Republicans are a deeply divided party, a reality also on display in Richmond. On one side are the Christian fundamentalists and anti-abortion extremists; on the other are more pragmatic conservatives who fear that hard-line "family values" rhetoric could damage GOP hopes for regaining the presidency in 1996.

For the short term, however, the conservatives are finding their unity in their shared hatreds. While the Democratic Party has been criticized as a coalition pandering to interest groups—blacks, feminists, environmentalists, labor, gays, peace activists, etc.—the GOP is fast becoming a coalition of haters, a political umbrella for those who despise any group associated with the Democrats, even those "twenty-something kids with an earring." At a recent GOP conference, former Reagan-Bush aide Richard G. Darman made a similar point. He argued that the Republicans are concealing their lack of serious domestic initiatives "by simply aggregating the alienated."

But Clinton's immediate problem is how to escape the 1994 elections without becoming a two-year lame duck. The GOP's strategy this fall will be to focus the nation's growing alienation on Bill and Hillary Clinton, who have been damaged by Whitewater and related scandals. By electing enough Republicans to the House and Senate, the GOP

could then enforce a new gridlock, stopping all significant Clinton proposals and making the president look ineffective heading into 1996. Oliver North's candidacy in Virginia could be decisive in giving the Republicans that majority in the Senate. So Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, after a few days of handwringing, fell in line behind North.

Ironically, North's resurgence is in large part the Democrats' own doing, a result of their political cowardice and incompetence in 1987. As the shocking scope of the Iran-contra lawlessness became apparent, Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN) and Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI) feared a Watergate-style impeachment battle. To avoid that unpleasantness, Hamilton and Inouye bought Reagan's ludicrous cover story that blamed Iran-contra excesses on North and a few low-ranking "men of zeal." The Democrats also narrowed the Iran-contra debate into a bloodless dispute over institutional powers: is it ever right to lie to Congress?

The baddest and the ugliest parts of the story were thus "disappeared": U.S. government complicity in widespread human rights abuses—rapes, torture, mass murder and terrorism—in El Salvador and Honduras as well as in Nicaragua; the brazen violation of international law that earned Washington condemnation from the World Court in 1986; collaboration with unsavory dictators from Manuel Noriega to Saddam Hussein; and tolerance of cocaine trafficking by contra units as a fund-raising device. (Clerino Castillo, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent who was stationed in El Salvador, has recently joined the long list

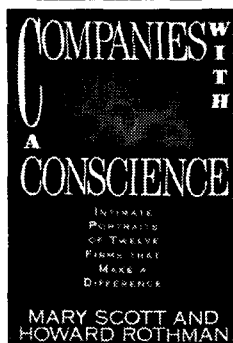
of witnesses who have reported that North and other Reagan administration officials permitted contras to smuggle cocaine into the United States, as the *Texas Observer* reported in its June 17 issue.)

Instead of highlighting the contras' criminality, the Democrats accepted the premise that the CIA-trained rebels were "freedom fighters" and that the Reagan policies were noble in their goals, if flawed in implementation. Then, through foolish grants of immunity, Congress gummed up North's criminal prosecution. Because of his immunized testimony to Congress, North succeeded in reversing his three 1989 felony convictions—and saved his political skin. Now, if North can clear the next hurdle and win election to the U.S. Senate, he is guaranteed a central place on the public stage for the foreseeable future. Before long, he will be discussed as a possible candidate on the national ticket. But even if he is kept outside a future Republican administration, his standing with the Christian Right will make him a GOP kingmaker and an influential adviser to Republican presidents.

Who knows, maybe North might finally get to dust off the Reagan-era plans that he helped draft for handling national emergencies. Ever the defender of constitutional rights, North left behind a blueprint for regional concentration camps to hold political dissidents.

Robert Parry wrote the first news story about Oliver North's secret White House operation in June 1985 for the *Associated Press*. He is the author of two books about Reagan-era deception: *Fooling America* and *Trick or Treason*.

Books That Make You Think

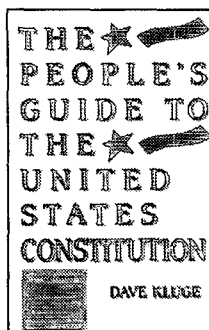


Companies with a Conscience

Intimate Portraits of Twelve Firms That Make a Difference
By Mary Scott and Howard Rothman

Intriguing profiles of companies that are not only profitable, but environmentally conscious, pro-employee and socially responsible.

Paperback \$12.95 #51502

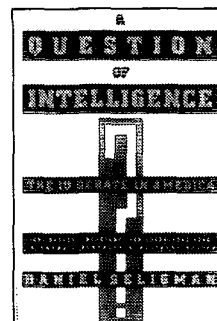


The People's Guide to the United States Constitution

By David Kluge

Know your rights, thanks to this easy-to-understand annotated version of America's founding document - every difficult word, phrase or clause is fully explained.

Hardcover \$16.95 #72218



A Question of Intelligence

The IQ Debate in America
By Daniel Seligman

A carefully-researched, clearheaded, even witty book which dares to deliver this bracing message: people are born with unequal mental abilities.

Paperback \$10.95 #51507

To order, call 1-800-447-BOOK (Mastercard or Visa) or send a check or money order to Carol Publishing Group, 120 Enterprise Ave., Dept. IN, Secaucus, NJ 07094.

Please include \$3.50 shipping and handling for the first book ordered and \$.75 for each additional book.

THE MILITARY

Broken chain of command

N

o provisions of the Constitution are as hallowed as those requiring the subordination of the military to civilian control. But in the last decade, despite the Cold War's end, the military has assumed an increasingly independent role in American politics. The Pentagon, and not Congress, has taken the primary role in shaping the military budget. The military has also been increasingly central to setting the foreign policy agenda. And the armed forces have become imbued with an unseemly spirit of political partisanship, manifested most recently in hostility toward President Bill Clinton.

The military's growing prominence has created apprehension on Capitol Hill and among former State and Defense Department officials. But the clearest statement of concern appeared in *The National Interest*, a journal founded

The Pentagon has assumed an increasingly intrusive role in American politics.

By John B. Judis
WASHINGTON D.C.

by neo-conservative Irving Kristol, which, under editor Owen Harries, has become an important source of non-partisan debate about foreign policy. In this spring's issue, the eminent military historian Richard H. Kohn, who has just completed his second term as president of the Society for Military History, warns that "we have been witness this last year and a half, actually this last five years, to the erosion of civilian control of the military, and we ought to recognize it."

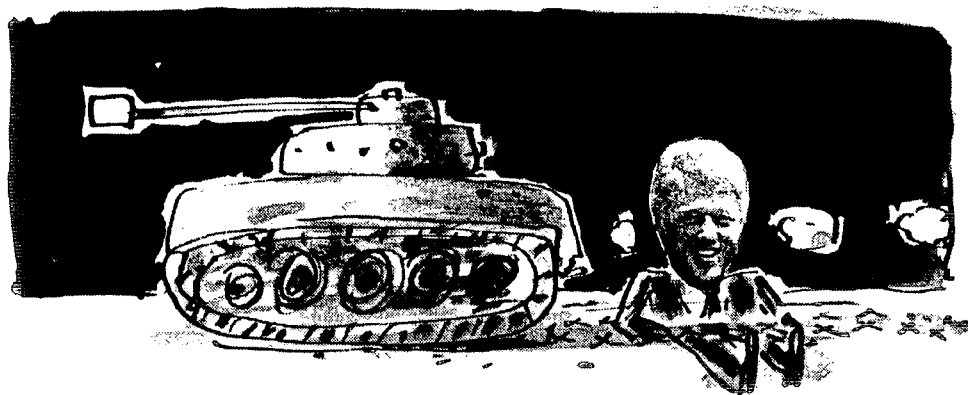
The journal's summer issue includes an angry response to Kohn from Colin Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but also strong confirmation of Kohn's argument from former Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, who warns of the rise of "a separate military caste." "Civilian control, as the term is generally understood and certainly as it was intended by the Founding Fathers, has been eliminated," he suggests. These are harsh judgments—and they don't come from the director of Greenpeace, but from a foreign policy conservative.

Since World War II, the military has played a major role in dictating the particulars of the military budget, but not—until recently—the overall shape of the budget. NSC-68, the key document setting Cold War spending targets, was drawn up under the supervision of civilian Paul Nitze and his boss, Secretary of State Dean Acheson. But last year's "Bottom Up Review," setting Pentagon spending guidelines for the '90s, bore the distinct stamp of then-Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Powell rather than then-Secretary of Defense Les Aspin. The key formulation—that the United States should be prepared to fight simultaneously two major regional conflicts—belonged to Powell and the military. It was voiced publicly by Powell in a winter 1992-1993 *Foreign Affairs* article written before Clinton took office. Prior to becoming secretary of defense, Aspin himself had set more modest goals for a post-Cold War military.

Powell and the other top military leaders also strenuously and successfully lobbied against major reductions in the military budget. In 1992, Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA), the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, asked Powell for a full-blown report that would outline areas in which the military could make reductions, but Powell's cursory report called for reductions of \$400 to \$600 million a year—less than 1 percent of the \$60 billion that the Clinton administration was then seeking to cut. Largely through the military's efforts, the defense budget has remained at 85 percent of its peak Cold War level.

Powell and the Joint Chiefs also undercut the commander in chief in response to Clinton's proposal for removing the ban on gays in the military. In November 1992, Powell threatened to resign if Clinton went through with his plan,

© PETER HANINAN



and Powell and other top military leaders openly attacked Clinton's plan in speeches and testimony. According to one Pentagon official, the Joint Chiefs of Staff met more times over the gay issue than they did over Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Of course, the military has always had some influence over how wars are conducted—but it has not had the power to decide whether the United States goes to war or how it projects its power overseas. Since the mid-'80s, however, the military has assumed a much more direct role in foreign policy. In 1987, then-Joint Chiefs chairman Adm. William Crowe maneuvered behind the scenes to get the Reagan administration to use American warships to escort Kuwaiti tankers in the Persian Gulf. Over the opposition of Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Crowe also set up a secret channel with the Soviet military chief, Marshal Sergei Akromeyev, and attempted to curb the development of Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

Powell was even less hesitant than his predecessor about throwing his weight around. He delayed American intervention in Kuwait and then successfully lobbied for ending the war before the United States had deposed Saddam Hussein. He lobbied privately and publicly against American intervention in Bosnia. In October of 1992, he even wrote a *New York Times* op-ed piece justifying his position against Bosnian intervention. He also initially blocked sending American troops to Somalia. Powell's successor, Gen. John Shalikashvili, has been following this precedent by discouraging American intervention in Haiti.

While the military has been playing a greater role in the making of policy, it has also been developing an increasingly partisan political outlook. Kohn traces the military's partisanship back to the early '60s, when John Kennedy's secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, tried to establish tighter civilian controls over weapons purchases. McNamara's initiatives, combined with the humiliating U.S. defeat in Vietnam, fueled a political backlash among military leaders. During the '70s, Kohn reports, the military's upper echelons increasingly aligned themselves with the Republican Party.

This partisanship is now more blatant than ever. In the 1992 race, for example, Powell himself did everything but endorse Bush for president. One month before the election,

he wrote in the *New York Times* that "Bush, more than any other recent president, understands the proper use of force."

How has the military come to exceed its constitutional mandate as subordinate to civilian direction? In part, the military's enlarged role is simply the legacy of the Cold War, during which the armed forces became too large and too multifaceted for any civilian arm to control effectively.

But there are two other factors that have thrust the military onto center stage. First, there's the structural reorganization of the military that Nunn and Barry Goldwater championed in 1986. The restructuring was supposed to make civilian control of the military easier by streamlining the chain of military command—but its main effect has been to enhance the power of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Before the 1986 reorganization, the chairman merely represented the consensus of the other service chiefs. Now the chairman is the leading representative of American military policy, with an advisory seat on the National Security Council.

Powell and Crowe used this authority to influence foreign policy and to limit the options that the White House was presented with. Lehman describes how Powell, after the Iraqis had been driven from Kuwait, ensured that Bush was only presented with one option for terminating the conflict.

Second, Crowe, Powell and now Shalikashvili have occupied leadership positions during a time when the White House was plagued by uncertainty about what American foreign policy should be. They were filling a vacuum. In addition, the military has been able to intimidate Clinton, who suffered a stinging defeat of his proposal to remove the ban on gays and who—because of his own lack of military service—has suffered from an inferiority complex in dealing with the Pentagon. Clinton will now do almost anything to appease the military. He fired Aspin, who was unpopular at the Pentagon, and sought initially to replace him with a former military man, Adm. Bobby Inman, who openly expressed disagreement with Clinton's policies. Moreover, the president has deferred to Pentagon judgment about whether to use force in Bosnia and Haiti.

Kohn doesn't think the ascendant military poses an imminent threat to U.S. security. Certainly there is no danger of a Latin American-style military coup. In substantive terms, the main damage has been to the federal budget—making reductions in defense spending extremely difficult. But the rise in the military's power, combined with the public's fascination with martinets like Ross Perot and Oliver North, is cause for concern. What now appears merely problematic could eventually become genuinely dangerous. ◀

BLACK AMERICA

Into the breach

Less than a week after being wounded by a lone gunman in Riverside, Calif., Khallid Abdul Muhammad was back on the lecture circuit. His popularity fueled by a new whiff of martyrdom, the dismissed aide of Nation of Islam (NOI) chief Louis Farrakhan has resumed his curious crusade to undermine the NOI leader's struggle for mainstream acceptance.

Infighting within the Nation of Islam threatens its quest for mainstream acceptance.

By Salim Muwakkil

The shooting incident and the vexing issues it provokes place the NOI in the media spotlight just as Farrakhan has increased his efforts to burnish the group's image—a campaign crucial to his attempts to cultivate closer relationships with the traditional forces of black leadership.

That fledgling fellowship was hampered by an infamous tirade from Muhammad at New Jersey's Kean College late last year. And the Riverside shooting

occurred just as Farrakhan was set to formalize that new relationship at the long-awaited National African-American Leadership Conference on June 14-16 in Baltimore.

The alleged assailant, 49-year-old James Edward Bess, is accused of wounding Muhammad and five others following a speech at the Riverside campus of the University of California. Bess is a lone eccentric with a history of violent behavior. He pleaded not guilty to one charge of premeditated attempted murder and five charges of assault with a deadly weapon.

Bess has no official NOI connection today but, according to one former member, he once served as an assistant minister with the group before being suspended for misconduct. He reportedly was dismissed by none other than Khallid Abdul Muhammad, who, at the time, was the NOI's West Coast regional minister. The association of violence with the NOI adds another complication in the group's quest for respectability and another level of controversy to the Baltimore gathering.

The conference—popularly called the “black summit”—was sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Farrakhan's participation provoked a storm of criticism. Several Jewish groups demonstrated outside of the NAACP's Baltimore headquarters to protest Farrakhan's presence.

“Invitation to the summit should not be seen as an endorsement,” NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Chavis explained. “Our purpose is to get the leadership to the table.” More than 100 black organizations were invited, he said, spanning the political spectrum. “In order to do civil rights you have to do things that are controversial, and I think that what I've done has made some people uncomfortable,” Chavis told the *Wall Street Journal*. “But in making them uncomfortable I have brought new life to the NAACP.”

Chavis insists, however, that he has not changed the 85-year-old group's essential mission. He claims that since his assumption of leadership, the group has “reaffirmed its fundamental character as a mainstream integrationist civil rights organization comprised of members of different racial, ethnic and religious groups.”

The conference, Chavis noted, was organized after his group took a pledge of unity with the NOI and Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition last fall during the Congressional Black Caucus' Legislative Weekend. Chavis promised the NAACP's support for a concerted attack on the escalating ills of the African-American community, and this leadership “summit” was designed to be the staging ground for such an attack. The “unity pledge” was one of many controversial moves that the 46-year-old Chavis has made since

assuming leadership of the tradition-laden NAACP.

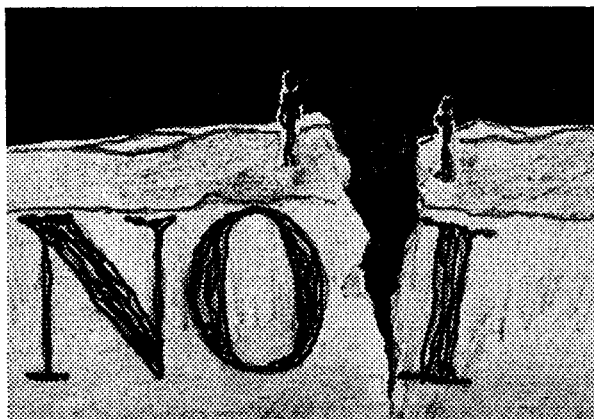
Immediately after taking over in April 1993, Chavis helped coordinate a number of street gang summits in several cities, linking the concerns of the black middle class with those of the so-called underclass. He's challenging the cultural conservatism of clergy-led black leadership with his strong support for gay rights. And, by signing an employment agreement with the Denny's restaurant chain, he's spearheading a new tactic of demanding direct economic compensation from corporations for past racist behavior.

But nothing has provoked as much protest as Chavis' alliance with Farrakhan, who champions a strict separatist doctrine of black nationalism. The uneasiness is understandable. After all, the NAACP's integrationist perspective has historically been projected as nationalism's ideological opposite. But the current crisis afflicting African-Americans has greatly reduced the relevance of those ideological distinctions. Still, many staunch supporters of the NAACP remain wary of embracing the NOI, and the specter of internal strife evoked by the Bess shooting does little to ease their fears. Despite denials all around, there is considerable strife within the NOI.

In his recent public appearances, Farrakhan has yet to specifically address the wounding of his former aide. But he has softened his rhetoric considerably. Speaking in Las Vegas shortly after the shooting incident, Farrakhan told an audience of about 8,000 at the University of Nevada that "to be a racist, to me, is to be one who promotes his or her race as superior to, or better than any other race. That's wickedness." The 61-year-old NOI leader added, "Although I want to see black people uplifted, I will never resort to evil to uplift black people at the expense of others."

Such sentiments are almost diametrically opposed to Muhammad's recent tirades, in which, among other things, he has professed love for Colin Ferguson, accused of gunning down white passengers on a Long Island commuter train in a racially motivated killing spree. The comments of the two are at such variance that one has to conclude either that the two have serious disagreements about NOI tactics, or that they are attempting some sort of bad-cop/good-cop public relations ploy.

The shooting of Muhammad provoked many in the media to speculate about the parallels between recent events and the 1965 assassination of Malcolm X. Just as Malcolm challenged NOI patriarch Elijah Muhammad before his assassination, Khallid Abdul Muhammad is now challenging NOI leader Louis Farrakhan. There is no evidence of internecine skullduggery in this shooting, however. At this



point it seems clear that Bess, incited by some private grievance, acted alone.

But there *are* tensions between supporters of Muhammad and the Farrakhan faithful. Many NOI members are perplexed by Muhammad's continuing quest for controversy. Since Farrakhan chastised and demoted him for language that was "vile" and "disgusting," Muhammad's rhetoric has become even more outrageous.

"Khallid seems to be forcing Farrakhan's hand on this one," surmises one close observer. "While he claims loyalty to Farrakhan, he's also trying to push his own agenda." In addition to his new-found public celebrity, Muhammad has an avid following among the NOI's more militant members. He is a former captain of the group's security forces, Fruit of Islam, and remains highly regarded among the unit's hardcore soldiers. Muhammad also has a base of support among members of a rival, Atlanta-based Black Muslim faction led by Silis Muhammad and called the Lost Found Nation of Islam.

Sympathetic observers are mystified by Farrakhan's failure to rein in his volatile former assistant. Some speculate that he is reluctant to test the limits of his authority. If, for example, Muhammad were to publicly bristle at another Farrakhan rebuke, it could trigger an open breach between the two and their respective followers. Farrakhan is alarmed by the prospect of such fracturing; he is acutely aware that internal dissent is the NOI's most lethal enemy.

If, however, Farrakhan does nothing and Muhammad continues his outrageous outbursts, the leader looks weak, indecisive and vulnerable. Should Muhammad break from the NOI, Farrakhan would still retain the allegiance of most in the group. But Muhammad's open discontent is emblematic. Many already regard Farrakhan as a corrupter of Elijah Muhammad's fundamental message. This provides Khallid Abdul Muhammad with both a cushion and a launching pad.

Invite Salim Muwakkil into your classroom.

Or David Moberg. Or Pat Aufderheide. Or Joel Bleifuss. You've come to rely on their viewpoints on politics, foreign affairs and culture in *In These Times*. Now you can offer their analysis of world events to your students. If you are a professor of political science, communications, sociology, history or related subjects, your students can receive *In These Times* for a fraction of the usual rate.

For information call (312)772-0100, ext. 239.

CENTRAL AMERICA

End games

W

Unless Daniel Ortega can overcome his antipathy to democracy, the Sandinistas won't have much of a future in Nicaragua.

David R. Dye
MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

hen Nicaragua's Sandinistas were voted out of office in February 1990, they did not yet realize just how much power they had lost. The Sandinistas, who had ousted dictator Anastasio Somoza in a 1979 revolution, consoled themselves with the thought that in surrendering the government peacefully to Violeta Chamorro, they were bequeathing democracy to their fellow Nicaraguans. They believed that the newly formed democratic institutions would allow the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), Nicaragua's principal political force, to protect the "conquests" of their years in power and even, in the controversial phrasing of Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, "govern from below."

Four years later, such optimism about democracy in Nicaragua is impossible. A cursory glance at the state

of Nicaragua's political institutions today reveals that progress toward the strengthening of democratic rule, though real, has been fitful. The legislative branch struggles to be taken seriously by the more powerful presidency, while a weak controller-general flails at (but does little to curb) corruption. At the same time, the Sandinista-controlled army goes through the motions of obedience to civilian authority, and human rights abuses go unpunished.

In this context, it is not surprising that the march of democracy in the FSLN has itself displayed the familiar pattern of "two steps forward, one step back." Daniel Ortega's re-election as FSLN secretary-general at last month's party congress made this patently clear. Since the Sandinistas' defeat, Ortega has developed an ever-more closed and personal leadership style. His penchant for making decisions without consulting anyone—the calling of the congress is a case in point—has become legendary, while his support among the party faithful has made him unwilling to brook real opposition. At the congress, he

easily turned back a challenge to his leadership from his erstwhile alter ego Sergio Ramírez—who, as vice president during the '80s, was arguably the man who really ran the government while Ortega engaged in constant "meet the people" sessions.

Ortega did not simply defeat Ramírez, however: in a display of vengeance he engineered his rival's separation from the expanded, 15-member FSLN directorate. For many of his supporters, Ramírez's fall from grace has effectively separated the FSLN from its future. Few waxed as apocalyptic as historian Roberto Cajina, who suggested in the weekly *El Semanario* that "it remains only to write an epitaph and put the party in its tomb." But many agreed with the more sober judgment of directorate member Luis Carrion, who achieved re-election despite Ortega's disapproval, that "the congress has dealt a blow to the party's chances of regaining power in the 1996 election."

The reasons for this are straightforward enough. Ortega's championing of the sometimes violent struggles of Nicaraguan workers has made him unpopular among the ordinary run of Nicaraguans, many of whom blame the former president for scaring away much-needed investment. Though the 25 percent or so who are the FSLN's hard-core supporters will vote for him again, few others are likely to do so. By contrast, the moderate Ramírez, head of the "Sandinistas For a Return to the Majorities," appears to be the only party leader who can reach out to the uncommitted majority of the electorate and weave the alliances necessary for winning an election and for governing effectively.

Unlike his brother Humberto, who has just agreed to step down as chief of the Sandinista Popular Army, Daniel

Ortega seems unwilling to read the handwriting on history's wall, and will probably insist on being the FSLN's standard-bearer again. Perhaps sensing the futility of this option, Humberto Ortega says he will not return to the FSLN fold after relinquishing his military command early next year.

Daniel Ortega's triumph at the congress, it should be noted, does not make him all-powerful in the FSLN. The "Democratic Left" wing of the FSLN, while backing Ortega against his rivals, wants to curb the leader's clout, surrounding him with committees for this and secretariats for that—in brief, it wants the FSLN to function as a party again, not as a one-man show. In the wake of the conclave, its leaders have made a quick bid for power in the party, one to which Ortega has had to bend.

One of the Democratic Left leaders, Managua party head Victor Hugo Tinoco, even argues that "there has never been as much democracy in the FSLN as now." He can point to some evidence for this claim. The extraordinary congress, in fact, marked several milestones. It held a one-on-one leadership election for the first time: Ortega defeated fellow directorate member Henry Ruiz Hernandez for party secretary-general by 65 percent to 35 percent, and after mandating 30 percent participation for women in party leadership bodies, elevated five women to the national directorate. For the majority, this was "renewal," or all the renewal they could handle.

Superficial shows of democratic procedure, however, could not conceal the Sandinistas' inability to debate meaningfully the unresolved differences in their ranks, or to develop a political program tailored to the needs of the '90s. The Democratic Left wants the FSLN to remain the militant and combative vanguard party that it was during the revolutionary decade, hunkering down and organizing the masses in a solid unity. If doses of violence are necessary to achieve short-term ends, this wing of the leadership is willing to dole them out, or to watch others do so.

The opposing current in the FSLN thinks the style and symbols of the Sandinista revolution no longer resonate with the majority of Nicaraguans. Deputy Jose León Talav-

era, a Ramírez supporter, recently remarked, "We are prisoners of a political style linked to values like mystique, heroism and sacrifice that the society no longer esteems highly." What is needed, he suggests, is not more unity in combativeness but more democracy—a party open to all comers, willing to abide by peaceful rules of the game, a party that strives for consensus. These are positions that earned the supporters of Ramírez epithets and left them attempting to fend off back-stage power plays.

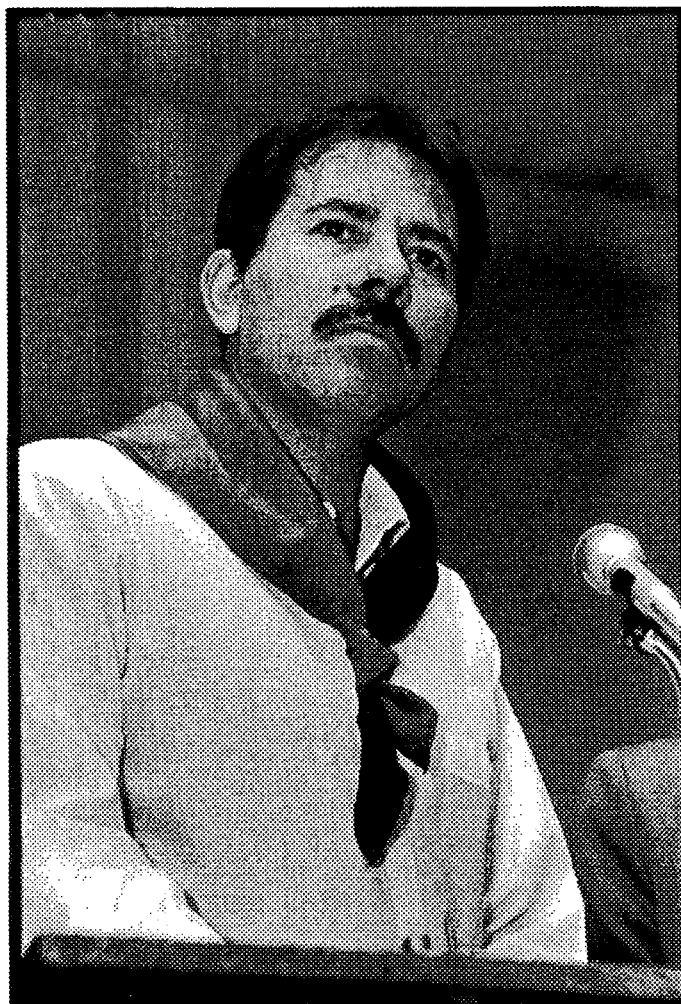
The low standing of *Sandinismo* in the eyes of the current generation of Nicaraguan youth would seem to suggest which of these approaches is most effective. Young people's view of the Sandinista Front is primarily negative: one recent survey indicated that 53 percent oppose the Sandinistas, while only 33 percent support them. Though unemployment is worse today than in the '70s, and the tentacles of the drug culture are spreading, Nicaraguan youth do not have a dictatorship to fight against, and have behind them the example of a revolution that failed to redeem its promise, at the cost of many young soldiers' lives. If not necessarily conformist, they are politically apathetic, and little given to sloganeering.

And so the once-mighty FSLN, hope of the Latin American left during the '80s, appears in danger of converting itself into a closed sect of aging revolutionaries, a one-generation party slated to die a natural death for lack of new tissue growth.

If its decline continues, the specter haunting the mind of Henry Ruiz—the specter of a savage capitalist restoration in Nicaragua, with even less participation for the popular sectors than

now—will assume ever-larger proportions. Waiting in the wings to preside over the restoration is another potential dictator, another *caudillo*, one with even less respect for institutions than Daniel Ortega. Managua's right-wing mayor Arnoldo Alemán, if elected president, would be capable of dealing a coup de grâce not only to the FSLN, but also to the incipient democracy that is its main achievement.

David R. Dye writes regularly on Central America for *In These Times*.



EDUCATION

Students teaching students

By Frank Riessman

For the past three decades we've been hearing that our schools are in trouble.

You know the dismaying inventory: not enough teachers; non-stop government cutbacks for education; high school graduates who can't multiply four times six and have never heard of Mark Twain. Add to this the drugs, the teen sex, the crime in the corridors, the guns in the lockers, the unfulfilled mandate to provide equal education for *all* our children, rich and poor, black, yellow, brown and white, and it becomes clear that the shouting about crisis in the classroom is by no means crying wolf.

What will help? Popular wisdom tells us that the salvation for young minds lies in increased state and government funding for education plus more equipment, more teachers, more training—the usual.

Necessary as such aids may be, they represent *external fixes* that in no way generate change from within.

Perhaps we've been approaching the problem from the wrong end. Perhaps the question is not what can be done to help our schools, but rather, what unutilized resources already exist that will help the schools help themselves.

In many cases it's innovation, not

money, that will save the day. Instead of putting all of our hopes and energies onto the funding bandwagon, we should give serious thought to a powerful educational resource that is already here for the taking: the student body itself.

What I am suggesting, in brief, is an *institutional self-help model* based on the notion of cross-age tutoring: older kids teaching younger kids, and earning academic credits for their efforts.

Under such a system, high school students would tutor Head Start preschoolers, plus youngsters in kindergarten through third grade, on a one-to-one basis several hours a week. This program would be offered to interested high school students as a regular class in their high school curriculum, or as a community service requirement. Students, moreover, would receive credit rather than money for their work—and so the cost of such a program would be minimal to both taxpayers and the community at large.

Many preschoolers, though given a substantial learning boost by Head Start, are often provided so little educational follow-through when they enter the school system that the advantages they gain from this important program seep away by the time

they reach the second or third grade.

"What we are finding," says Dr. Arthur J. Reynolds, a researcher at Yale, "is that it takes more than just a preschool program or even a kindergarten program to have any long-lasting effects. The students who have the continuous services through third grade are the only ones who stand out." Moreover, the Head Start program has been severely wounded during the last decade by funding cutbacks, and can no longer be counted on to play Atlas for the ever-growing, increasingly needy American preschool population. And with the government's attention currently riveted on trimming the deficit, the prospects of increased funding do not look rosy.

But a low-cost, long-term, internally based "self-help" tutorial program in our schools could take up the slack.

A number of studies, for instance, indicate that the most effective method of reinforcing learning in ex-Head Start children is one-on-one academic tutoring by teachers. This, of course, is an expensive proposition. It has led to worrisome quid pro quo proposals like the one suggested in the *New York Times* on March 4, 1992, in which larger numbers of teachers would be used as tutors for Head Start graduates in return for an overall reduction in the Head Start program itself.

But if educators would recognize that cross-age tutoring using high schoolers is a viable alternative to teacher tutoring, and can help Head Start students maintain their cognitive gains (as well as earn significantly higher promotion rates than children not in the program), the common sense behind establishing this tutorial model in kindergartens and primary level schools around the country would be plain.

It could, of course, be argued that high school students—even the best and the brightest of them—are untrained in the principles of elementary school instruction, and that they

are simply not qualified to teach young children.

This problem is not insurmountable. Students in the tutorial program, as part of the course requirement, would be given a solid grounding in reading instruction, language arts, training and child development. When the time came for student tutors to work with preschoolers, moreover, supervision would be provided by the course teacher and the Head Start instructor in whose class the tutorial would be given. This feature provides tutors with supplemental training and at the same time allows teachers to feel they are an integral part of the project.

Everyone helps, everyone learns, everyone wins.

Cross-age tutoring is a concept that has been around for some time and has been used on an experimental basis in many school settings. Research shows that it reduces school costs, dramatically improves the cognitive skills of tutees—and that the tutors themselves profit educationally from this endeavor.

In many cases, cross-age tutors demonstrate a marked improvement in grades, in learning capability and in general social skills. Most older students rise to the occasion, striving to become responsible role models for their tutees. Given a positive introduction to the field of education through the tutoring and supervision interchange, many student tutors eventually go on to earn their teaching degrees, thus providing a much-needed influx of dedicated professionals into the schools. As H.L. Mencken once remarked, "A teacher is one who, in his youth, admired teachers."

Nor do the gains stop at the individual and classroom levels. Studies of cross-age tutoring demonstrate that schools and the community at large can both profit. Here the door is wide open for innovative educational planning. Student tutors, for example, could be trained to work with handicapped youngsters mainstreamed into the educational system. Tutors could be used to guide immigrant youngsters through the serpentine byways of our

school system and our culture at large, a kind of student Peace Corps in reverse. Such a practice could save schools considerable money, and simultaneously ease the angst that so many foreign students undergo when first entering our educational system.

Since, moreover, high school youngsters listen to their peers with far more enthusiasm than to their parents or teachers, peer and cross-age helpers could be recruited to help troubled students sort out their priorities and make smart choices when confronted with the multiple temptations of drugs, alcohol, promiscuity and criminal behavior.

It's a no-lose proposition for everyone. Indeed, if these and similar programs were sponsored on a large scale in our institutions of learning over the next few years, an entire change in the ethos of the educational system could conceivably come about, a change born of qualities that are increasingly rare in American schools today—group cooperation, mutual trust and the natural impulse to help others.

Cross-age tutoring is a movement

whose time has come. Why not talk about it with your children's teachers, and run it by your kids? Raise the issue with your school board. Urge others to do the same. Discuss the matter with friends and neighbors, and at meetings of the PTA. The price is right, certainly, and the time is ripe. All it takes is persistence and a willingness to try something a little different, keeping the fact ever in mind that, as Eudora Welty once wrote, "All serious daring starts from within."

Frank Riessman is the editor of *Social Policy* and co-director of the Peer Research Laboratory in New York.

This article is part of a continuing series on education edited by Alex Molnar, a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The series, "Notes From the Back of the Class," covers a wide range of education-related issues. Contributions from readers are welcome. Manuscripts of no more than 1,000 words should be sent to Alex Molnar c/o In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

15 YEARS of Popular Economics

Where Do We
Go From Here?
Alternatives and Strategies



Fifteenth Anniversary
Conference

Center for
Popular Economics

August 5-7, 1994
Smith College
Northampton, MA

For More Information:

C.P.E. Box 785
Amherst, MA 01004
413-545-0743

No library of the political economy of capitalism is complete without...

The Democratic State Critique of Bourgeois Sovereignty

by Karl Held and Audrey Hill

• It's amazing what passes for a theory of the state: random lists of its *functions*; or complaining about its *corruption* which prevents the performance of its democratic *good deeds*; or a "proof" of how its *structure* determines everything! Or...

• How about a book that just explains the democratic state in a logical order, from its purpose in promoting competition based on private property, through constitutionality, law and justice, programs to maintain the workers as workers and the capitalists as capitalists (no confusion there!), taxation, budget and economic policy, and ending with elections and the sphere of public opinion.

• When old Marx wrote that democracy was an "adequate form" of state for capitalism, he wasn't kidding! At last, you can read the book that proves it.

Counterpoint Press, 128 pages, \$7.45

MHB-USA / P.O. Box 9322
Schenectady, N.Y. 12309-0322

I N T H E A R T S

Women with a difference

“H ave a female fun time!” That quirky phrase, delivered in the new film *Bhaji on the Beach*, describes the pleasures offered by both *Bhaji*, which explores the relationships of three generations of British-Indian women, and *Go Fish*, a lesbian date-movie.

Two independent films offer spirited looks at distinct female subcultures.

By Pat Dowell

The “female fun time” in *Bhaji* is a day trip into the tattered splendor of Blackpool, a city that is sort of an English Coney Island. Traveling none too easily together are old aunties, who are staunch traditionalists; their daughters, going through the rigors of marriage and failing relationships; and teenagers, who have left the old world far behind.

The aunties disapprove both of a young woman’s decision to leave her abusive husband and of a college student’s affair with a black man, which has resulted in an unwanted pregnancy. Both men show

up in Blackpool, where they search for their women with greatly differing intentions. The husband and his brothers are determined to drag the wife and son back, while the black boyfriend wants to share his lover’s dilemma.

Director and co-writer Gurinder Chadha clearly draws on her own rich life in an Indian family that has migrated twice—to Africa and then to Britain. The result is a story filled with extraordinary detail and compassionate humor. More than a dozen characters remain vivid and distinct through the intricately interwoven plot, warmly acted by an Asian cast that is uniformly good. Shaheen Khan as the self-assured trip organizer is a standout, along with Lalita Ahmed as a dutiful wife whose mind wanders repeatedly into the lush fantasy realms of Indian movies.

Director Chadha is remarkably adroit at blending politics with engrossing drama. *Bhaji* (the title refers to the Indian appetizers that have become a part of British dining) echoes and builds on the English tradition of social realism, practiced by such directors as

Ken Loach (*Riff-Raff*, *Raining Stones*), to chronicle an immigrant’s England.

For this purpose, Blackpool is the perfect metaphor for vanished Empire and working-class dreams. The Britons imperialism has made—the immigrants from its liberated outposts—now roam Blackpool’s tacky tourist-trap streets. They are at once part of the pop-culture Raj celebrated in Blackpool’s “exotic” architecture, and yet an alien presence as well. They don’t quite belong, but they don’t seem to mind. Chadha has the genius to make it clear that their lives are a part of the rejuvenation of both cultures.

Bhaji on the Beach celebrates the place these women have made for themselves in a world that is at once old and new—much like the “bhangra” dancehall music on the soundtrack, which reinvigorates British pop standards (most hilariously “Summer Holiday”) with Indian instrumentation and Punjabi lyrics.

Chadha maintains the delicate balance between individualism and camaraderie



Bhaji at the Beach
Directed by
Gurinder Chadha

Go Fish
Directed by Rose Troche

in this delicious romp through women's lives. Eventually old and young understand the common ground on which they stand. They form a united front against the battering bully who catches up to his wife underneath a Blackpool amusement pier, and we have the pleasure of watching what culture clash means in its most fruitful sense—that a new world is being born.

Go Fish is also a woman-made portrait of women-with-a-difference. In this case the setting is Chicago, and the women are lesbians. The screenplay, co-written by director Rose Troche and star Guinevere Turner, borrows from Hollywood's romantic comedies. It's the old story of two lonely people steered toward each other by their wiser friends.

Turner plays a hip young Generation X-er, Max, who has gone a year without a date. The unlikely mate her pals have selected for her is a bashful older woman named Ely (V. S. Brodie), whom Max initially decides has a severe case of "hippie-itis." At another point, Max complains to a friend, "You're so '70s." And so the minor chasm between the old and the young is charted, and, as it happens, bridged—once Max and Ely get together. Along the way, current fashion, sexual slang and dating etiquette get a thorough going over, with humor and affection.

Where *Bhaji on the Beach* is embarrassingly rich in performances, *Go Fish* is postmodern minimalist in that department. The acting is primitive by any of the usual standards (and so is the sound-recording quality), but Troche's stylishness and boundless enthusiasm for the characters make this flaw seem almost a daring strategy. Some of the women in *Go Fish*—such as T. Wendy McMillan as the bountiful matchmaker, Kia—blast right through their awkward line readings.

Go Fish bounces with jazzy energy, emanating not only from its catchy score. The hesitant courtship of Max and Ely is punctuated with exuberant directorial flourishes, such as lyrical scenes of talking heads—women lying down, head to head and shot from above, their faces arranged in circles or patterns like a Busby Berkeley production number. Instead of synchronized chorus girls, it's the couple's friends gossiping about the chance of love breaking out.

During a ribald discussion of sexual appetites, one member of this Greek chorus reminds another that the game of love has some rules: "It's called *Go Fish*, not *All You Can Eat*." As the romance reaches its consummation, Troche inserts more cinematic grace notes in the form of lesbian lovers' bodies in closeup. Even the credits are pulsing with life in *Go Fish*.



Photo (left) of John Kenway and director Gurinder Chadha.

Above, scene from *Bhaji on the Beach*.

A hit at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year, and the first of the Sundance films to be picked up by a distributor (Samuel Goldwyn), *Go Fish* is being touted as the lesbian *She's Gotta Have It* (Spike Lee's breakout film, also a romantic comedy, also shot on a shoestring in black and white). And many are hoping it is the gay film that will cross over to mainstream audiences, or at least those who frequent art houses.

Like *Bhaji on the Beach*, it is a film that is as much about the differences among women as about the experience of being a woman in a society that assumes (or perhaps wishes, for simplicity's sake) that we're all alike. One size does not fit all, as both these movies make jubilantly clear. ◀

I N P R I N T

Who framed feminism?

By Leora Tanenbaum

With all the unsolicited advice feminists get, it can be difficult to sort out the well-meaning critiques from the mean-spirited attacks. But it's important to distinguish one from the other, since some of the best critiques of feminism, in fact, come from other feminists.

Many high-profile media feminists could certainly benefit from intelligent critique. Gloria Steinem's single-minded emphasis on self-esteem—as exemplified by her bestselling *Revolution From Within*—elides political issues of power. In her latest book, *Fire With Fire*, Naomi Wolf's model of female power is rooted more in the individualistic goal of networking than in the collective potency of coalition-building. Catharine MacKinnon considers degrading sexually explicit materials a cause rather than a symptom of sexism. And the "difference feminists," led by Carol Gilligan, promote the feel-good idea that women are morally superior to men.

Each of these self-appointed spokeswomen centers her attention around one issue or concern instead of analyzing sexism with the multifaceted approach it requires. It is important to point out the shortcomings

of these different feminist leaders, and the feminisms they advocate, not to prove one's ideological or moral superiority but because debate is the only way to iron out ideological kinks.

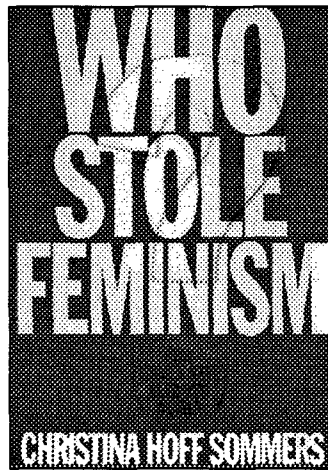
Christina Hoff Sommers' *Who Stole Feminism?* purports to offer a solution to the contemporary feminist impasse. But Sommers, a philosophy professor at Clark University who attracted media attention this spring when she told *Esquire* that "[t]here are a lot of homely women in women's studies," has no genuine desire to improve feminism. Instead of critique, she offers caricature, leveling personal attacks against feminist personalities she despises and accusing them of being liars. With its deliberately provocative title and its muckraking style, the book will undoubtedly be seized upon by mainstream journalists as a cunning exposé of feminist duplicity.

Sommers sets up a dichotomy between "good" feminism, which seeks equality with men, and "bad" feminism, which wallows in a self-righteous sense of victimhood. (Given her simplistic, dualistic organization of feminist thought, you have to wonder how she managed to acquire a doctorate in philosophy.)

"The New Feminists, many of them privileged, all of them legally protected and free, are preoccupied with their own sense of hurt and their own feelings of embattlement and 'siege,'" Sommers writes. Feminism, she charges, has been taken over by "resenter feminists" whose bizarre and exaggerated ideological fixations have profoundly alienated mainstream women—who, as a result, have refused to wear the feminist label.

Sommers prefers equal-opportunity feminists, who have "reasonable" and "realistic" goals such as pay equity, and who style themselves after Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton rather than Robin Morgan. She peppers her book with nostalgic descriptions of 19th-century feminists. "The aims of the Seneca Falls activists were clearly stated, finite and practicable," she writes. "They would eventually be realized because they were grounded in principles—recognized constitutional principles—that were squarely in the tradition of equity, fairness and individual liberty." Although she does not name any specific contemporary equity feminists, she nonetheless admires their "moderate, unpretentious posture," for "they embrace no special feminist doctrines; they merely want for women what they want for everyone—a 'fair field and no favors.'"

This argument is hardly original or unique; we've heard it all before, with slight variations: Wendy Kaminer, Katie Roiphe and even Naomi Wolf (in her latest incarnation) have made similar points. But Sommers doesn't give any of these women credit; indeed, she never mentions any of the contemporary feminist thinkers who write about gender and power in a complicated way, who admit women's weaknesses and hold them accountable. Katha Pollitt, Ellen Willis and bell hooks have all written insightful—and thoroughly feminist—critiques of "victim feminism." But they don't get the national media attention that Steinem and Wolf com-



Who Stole Feminism?
How Women Have Betrayed Women
 By Christina Hoff Sommers
 Simon & Schuster
 320 pp., \$23

mand. And so their contribution to the debate is apparently not worthy of Sommers' attention.

Much of Sommers' book is devoted to laborious statistical deconstructions of widely accepted feminist "truths." By pointing out factual errors that have been disseminated by feminist writers, Sommers attempts to prove that the movement is predicated on willful misinformation—and that innocent women have been duped into believing that they are worse off than they really are.

"Resenter feminists ... speak of backlash, siege, and an undeclared war against women," Sommers writes. "But the condition they describe is mythic—with no foundation in the facts of contemporary American life. Real-life men have no war offices, no situation rooms, no battle plans against women. ... To the extent one can speak at all of a gender war, it is the New Feminists themselves who are waging it."

Sommers begins her book with a version of the statistical debunking routine employed so dramatically and successfully by Susan Faludi. Her book *Backlash*, you may recall, opened with a close analysis of the notorious 1986 marriage study by Harvard and Yale researchers—who had purportedly demonstrated that a college-educated single woman over the age of 35 had a better chance of being hijacked by a terrorist than finding a marriage partner. Faludi argued that the statistics were misleading at best—and, more generally, that statistics are not always the best guides to objective reality. She suggested, further, that the trumped-up "man shortage" stats fit suspiciously smoothly with prevailing assumptions about women's roles.

In her preface, Sommers demonstrates her own research prowess by disproving an oft-cited statistic—that about 150,000 women die of anorexia nervosa each year, or three times the number of men and women both who die from car accidents. Sommers first found this statistic in Steinem's *Revolution From Within*. She was skeptical, and began to dig around for the original source of the number. Steinem's source, it turned out, was *The Beauty Myth*. Wolf's source was historian Joan Brumberg, author of *Fasting Girls*. And Brumberg had attributed the figure to the American Anorexia

and Bulimia Association. When Sommers called the president of the association, she was told that they had been misquoted: in a 1985 newsletter, the association had referred to 150,000 to 200,000 *sufferers of*—not fatalities from—anorexia. The actual morbidity rate in 1991 was 54.

"Yet now the false figure, supporting the view that our 'sexist society' demeans women by objectifying their bodies, is widely accepted as true," Sommers laments. She goes on to reveal, with evident glee, that "[t]he anorexia 'crisis' is only one sample of the kind of provocative but inaccurate information being purveyed by women about 'women's issues' these days."

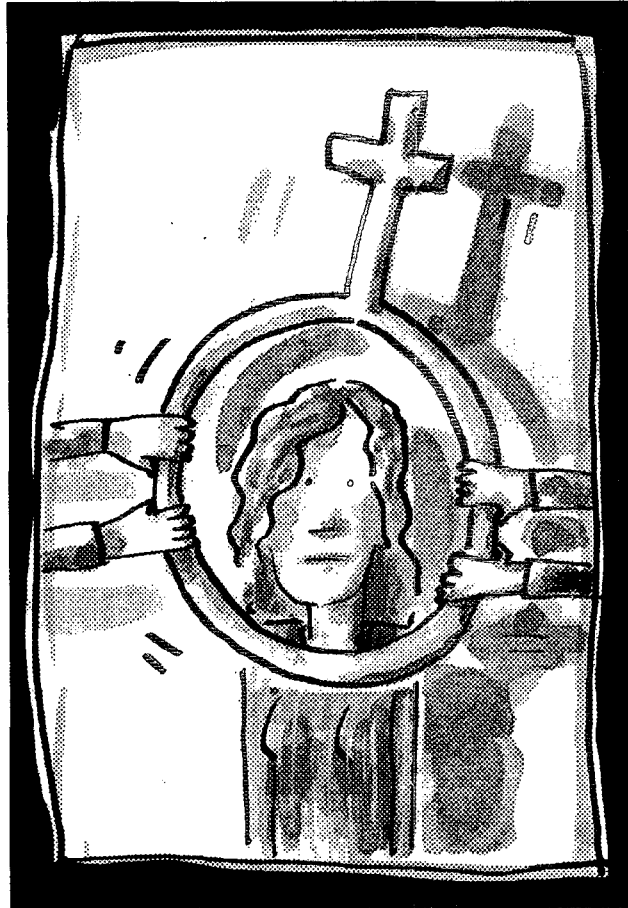
Sommers' case study No. 2 involves a similar series of mistakes. The president of the National Women's Studies Association, citing a March of Dimes report, announced in the fall of 1992 that "domestic violence (directed against pregnant women) is now responsible for more birth defects than all other causes combined." When Sommers called the March of Dimes to get a copy of the report, she was told that it did not exist. Yet journalists around the country were citing it. The mix-up originated when a reference to domestic battery in a speech was misunderstood and then written about without fact-checking.

Sommers performs a similar debunking exercise upon the

claims, much hyped in the media several years ago, that domestic battery increases dramatically on Super Bowl Sunday. (It doesn't.)

These stories are certainly embarrassing. I am glad that Sommers did the requisite digging to uncover these errors before they became even more entrenched in conventional wisdom. And I agree with her as well that these "falsehoods and exaggerations are muddying the waters of American feminism," for they do perpetuate a disheartening lie, that more women are oppressed than they are in reality.

But Sommers goes beyond cataloguing and correcting errors. She insinuates that feminists lie *on purpose* in order to further their arguments, "as a way of winning converts to their angry creed." This is ridiculous; as misguided as some feminist writers may be, they don't *deliberately* distort information. Sommers herself demonstrates that the mistakes were the unfortunate result of careless research via secondary sources. If she had chosen to investigate mistaken



information on any other topic—say, Whitewater or Lani Guinier's writings—the results would have been similar. Information gets twisted all the time, in many contexts; errors are endemic to all deadline-based work, from reporting to speech writing. All that Sommers has shown us is that she is a talented investigator, not that feminist leaders lie without scruples.

It's one thing to point out errors and excuses; it's another to simply deny that American women today suffer—emotionally, financially or physically—at the hands of men. Sommers simply cannot fathom, for example, that girls' self-esteem might plummet in adolescence, as several recent studies have suggested. She devotes two chapters to a 1991 American Association of University Women's (AAUW) report about this phenomenon. The AAUW awarded a grant to the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women to review the research, and their own report was completed in 1992. Based on a poll of 3,000 children, the report showed that girls between the ages of 11 and 16 experience a dramatic drop in self-esteem. But, Sommers complains, "[d]espite the sensational and sweeping nature of the findings ... none of the journalists who reported on the study interviewed any social scientists to see whether the poll ... was properly designed and its results properly interpreted."

What Sommers discovered, after talking to several psychologists, is that "there is little agreement about how to define [self-esteem] and far less agreement on how to measure it." As a result, she points out, researchers disagree about whether girls do in fact experience a dramatic drop in self-esteem. Further, Sommers challenges the poll's dependence on self-reporting, which she sees as inherently unreliable.

Sommers goes on to criticize the Wellesley Center's next study, which focused on sexual harassment of girls by boys in elementary school. Nan Stein of the Center designed a questionnaire that was placed in the September 1992 issue of *Seventeen*. Most of the respondents reported that they had indeed been harassed: 89 percent had received suggestive gestures, looks, comments or jokes, and 83 percent had been touched, pinched or grabbed. But, Sommers points out, only 4,200 of the magazine's 1.9 million subscribers returned the questionnaire—a dismal 0.2 percent response. And these respondents were self-selected, so of course they were biased. (As everyone knows, if data-gathering techniques are flawed, one can safely assume that the problem in question is illusory.)

Sommers prefers random-sampled polls, such as the one the Louis Harris firm conducted about school harassment. It showed that a high percentage of boys as well as girls are routinely harassed. But you know those feminists: all they care about is "female victimization and male malfeasance." Sommers concludes that boys instead of girls should receive the attention of the Wellesley Center.

Next, following the lead of Katie Roiphe, Sommers attacks Mary Koss, the psychologist who conducted the well-known *Ms.* magazine poll on rape. After interviewing

more than 3,000 college women, Koss found that 15 percent of respondents had been raped, and 12 percent had been victims of attempted rape. Sommers claims that the findings are suspect because Koss included in her tally of rape and attempted rape victims those women who did not believe they had been raped but whose descriptions conformed with the legal definitions of rape.

In other words, Koss made a point of *not* relying on self-reported rapes. And so Sommers contradicts herself: In critiquing the Wellesley report, Sommers was quick to fault studies relying on self-reporting; but in this context she has decided that self-reporting is the key to objective reality.

Not all of the book is devoted to facts and figures. Sommers also takes a quick tour through the groves of academe. Contemporary women's studies programs, she argues, do a disservice to students, feeding them a steady diet of feminist ideology instead of useful knowledge.

Academic feminism, she argues, is "unscholarly, intolerant of dissent and full of gimmicks." Women's studies classes are, in her view, simply "a waste of time ... They divert the energies of students—especially young women—who sorely need to be learning to live in a world that demands of them applicable talents and skills, not feminist fervor or ideological rectitude."

None of this is new: Sommers is merely rehashing tired arguments made popular by Dinesh D'Souza in *Illiberal Education* and, more recently, by Karen Lehrman in *Mother Jones*. (Sommers shares more with D'Souza than a distaste for academic feminists: both have received substantial funding from the conservative John M. Olin Foundation for their research.)

More troubling than Sommers' lack of originality is her hypocrisy. Her main argument, after all, is that "resenter feminists" have become so caught up in their own self-righteous sense of victimhood that they fail to recognize nuance and ambiguity—and so will eagerly seize on any dubious factoid to advance their cause.

Sommers' solution? To write a self-righteous book that selectively draws from polls, statistics and other information in order to advance *her* own agenda. A perfect example is the way she uses Naomi Wolf as an icon of "resenter feminism" without describing Wolf's recent ideological about-face until the penultimate chapter. Clearly, she's reluctant to acknowledge Wolf's transformation—she's now an exemplar of what Sommers would call "equity feminism"—because it undermines her polemic. How can one offer a persuasive critique of Naomi Wolf if Wolf has already made your argument herself?

Most distressing, though, is Sommers' completely skewed notion of feminist power. "Why was everybody so credulous?" she asks about the Super Bowl domestic battery controversy, as if feminists had the last laugh in hoodwinking the American public. A more useful question would have been, "Why were the claims so plausible?"

◀
Leora Tanenbaum writes regularly on issues of gender and culture for *In These Times*.

Prophet and loss

By Scott McLemee

Historians of American radicalism do play favorites. Some topics get researched endlessly; others are ignored. There is a book covering every stage and aspect of Communist Party (CP) history, from its birth-cries to its recent death-rattles. Yet the Socialist Party has seldom been studied beyond the year 1925—though it was, for many years after that, the CP's main competitor. The white New Left of the '60s has been scrutinized in great detail. But we have no authoritative history of the Black Panther Party.

And so, while considerable scholarly energy is now devoted to our radical heritage, many stray bands of visionaries have gone unchronicled, their ideas and experiences falling victim (in the late E.P. Thompson's phrase) to "the enormous condescension of posterity."

With *The Prophet's Children*, a memoir of some 30 years spent in the Trotskyist movement, Tim Wohlforth has made a distinctive contribution to the literature of the American left's recent past. A "pink diaper" baby (his adoptive parents were CP sympathizers), Wohlforth became an anti-Stalinist radical as a college student during the McCarthy era. Year by year, he was drawn deeper into the organizational life of the far left, and by the early '60s he emerged as the leader of his very own small Marxist sect, the Workers League. The FBI rewarded his efforts by compiling over 8,000 pages of surveillance files on him, many of them quoted in the book.

Trotskyism has always been a tiny current within the U.S. left—there have never been more than three thousand people in Trotskyist groups at any given time—yet the movement's influence has been disproportionately great. In large measure this reflected the appeal of Trotsky himself: a brilliant writer and the embodiment, for many, of the promise of the Russian Revolution. Throughout the '30s and '40s, the Trotskyists probably attracted more intellectual talent per capita than did the much larger Communist Party.

Wohlforth came later, joining the movement in the early '50s, at a time when the validity of Trotsky's diagnosis of Stalin's tyranny was well-established, but long after it became clear that his hoped-for world revolution would not

come to pass any time soon. "We were," Wohlforth recalls, "people whose political specificity had relevance only to a distant past and a distant possible future."

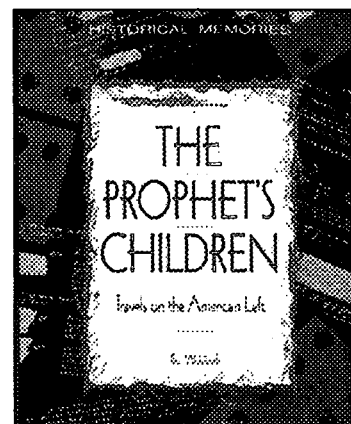
Yet in spite of this anachronism, or maybe because of it, the American Trotskyist movement sounds like not such a bad place to have spent the '50s. Here, Wohlforth's memoir conveys something very few historians have really grasped: the sense of the anti-Stalinist left as a counter-culture. In the era of the Cold War—as well as that of Zsa Zsa Gabor and the hula hoop—becoming a Trotskyist was a way to escape mass-culture zombiedom.

While his peers might have smoked reefer and gone to poetry readings, Wohlforth attended debates in old meeting halls in New York, trying to hash out an anti-Stalinist, anti-capitalist course for the Vietnamese revolution. While the beatniks of the day issued little mimeographed collections of bad poetry, Wohlforth and his associates published large mimeographed collections of bad prose (he quotes passages of it) devoted to internal disputes and theoretical finagling.

By the late '50s, as a professional "youth leader" for the movement, Wohlforth was encountering the first, very tentative stirrings of what would later become a much more visible student radicalism. Within a few years, Malcolm X would be a regular speaker at Trotskyist-sponsored events (one fact curiously missing from Spike Lee's film). Their eyes fixed firmly on 1917, Wohlforth and his friends marched, backwards, toward 1968.

After a rather complex series of blocs, splits and fusions, Wohlforth eventually became the leader of the Workers League, formed in 1966 and now little more than a curiosity. Throughout the '60s and beyond, Wohlforth worked at socialist politics full time, except for periods of employment as editor of trade journals for the tobacco and diesel-truck industry. He went through a marriage and several romantic liaisons during this period—all described in some detail—but doing the duty of the revolution was his real love.

The Workers League played a very minor role in what we think of today as "the '60s." But Wohlforth's account of the group's activities in this tumultuous decade is worth having—especially his recounting of the League's work among ghetto youth. During the '60s, the League became a sort of ultra-left YMCA, busily organizing basketball games, dances and summer camps for African-



The Prophet's Children: Travels on the American Left

By Tim Wohlforth

Humanities Press

332 pp, \$18.50

American and Puerto Rican street kids.

Wohlforth's narrative takes on a dark tone when he discusses the British group—at various times called the Socialist Labor League and the Workers Revolutionary Party—to which the Workers League was intimately linked. Its chief theorist and organizer was Gerry Healy, a figure best known as Vanessa Redgrave's political guru. Healy ran his group as a private domain for the gratification of his own ego—and as an erotic resort. A few years ago, his organization disintegrated when party members, after decades of verbal brutalization and sexual harassment, voted to expel him.

But during his prime Healy was able to indulge his various whims—and his considerable paranoia—in the hot-house atmosphere of the sectarian left. In 1973, Wohlforth suffered the consequences of that paranoia, when Healy accused Wohlforth's companion, Nancy Fields, of being a CIA agent. Nearly a decade after founding the Workers League, Wohlforth was driven from the organization by his former comrades.

The Workers League was not the only group then in crisis: five years after the exhilaration of 1968, whole sectors of the American left were caught up in similar episodes of almost breathtaking weirdness. And that fact makes Wohlforth's rather sensationalistic account an important addition to the historical record.

This April, immediately after it was published, *The Prophet's Children* created a minor sensation at the Socialist Scholars Conference in New York. It was the best-selling book at the Humanities Press table: people searched the index, found their names and bought a copy. (Whatever this may say about contemporary radicalism, it plainly teaches one lesson: if you are writing a memoir, include an index.) And some old Workers League members compounded the excitement by stalking Wohlforth at the conference and precipitating the occasional shouting match. At its literature table, the League offered for sale a booklet with the Lenin-esque title *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Wohlforth*.

Oddly enough, Wohlforth does not seem a bitter man. People who knew him during the '60s describe him as a fire-breathing sectarian: always ready to pounce with glee, to denounce, to polemicize. Now, he sounds almost mellow, except when writing about government surveillance.

The Prophet's Children is, with rare exceptions, a calm and readable book—though, as Samuel Johnson said of *Paradise Lost*, none could wish it longer. Wohlforth fills some otherwise blank pages in the history of American Marxism. In recording that past, the memoir seeks also to overcome it—anticipating, as Wohlforth puts it in the final pages, “a new American left that *begins* its thinking process with the fall of the Berlin Wall rather than with the storming of the Winter Palace.”

Scott McLeMee writes regularly on culture and politics for *In These Times*.

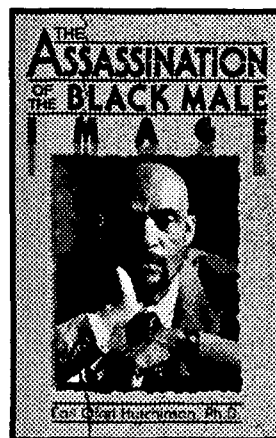
The Assassination of the Black Male Image by Earl Ofari Hutchinson, Ph.D.

"Hutchinson offers an angry rebuttal to the media images of black men . . . but his basic argument is irrefutable."

Charles Solomon, *LA Times*

"The Assassination is shocking in its honesty. It is real in its interpretation of history, of slavery, of the brutal reality facing black people in a white world."

Joe Williams III, *LA Watts Times*



"This collection of essays focuses on the images of African-American men in the mass media. Hutchinson argues, Americans have historically portrayed the black male as the 'universal bogeyman.'" David Cochran, *Columbia Missourian*

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW! Send a check or money order for **\$9.96** plus shipping \$1.50 to:
**Middle Passage Press • 5517 Secrest Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90043 • (800) 959-9323**

New from Interlink

Homeland

Oral Histories of
Palestine and Palestinians
by Staughton Lynd,
Alice Lynd and
Sam Bahour

320 pages
paperback \$14.95
hardcover \$35.00



"... riveting and moving...The reader is brought close enough to the participants to see the pain in their eyes; hear the palpable anger and hatred in their voices, and sense the scars on their souls... an invaluable resource..."

—*Alix Naff*
Smithsonian Institution

TO ORDER CALL TOLL-FREE

1-800-238-LINK

(If ordering by mail, add \$3.00 for the 1st book & \$1.00 for every additional book. NY residents add 8.25% tax)

Interlink Publishing, 99 Seventh Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11215

C L A S S I F I E D S

► HELP WANTED

UNION ORGANIZER. Oregon Public Employees Union seeks Organizers for school/nonprofit workers. Must be committed to rank-and-file empowerment/mobilization. Macintosh skills helpful. Long hrs/travel. Women/people of color urged to apply. 6-month position—Salary \$2213 mo. Send résumé, Exec. Dir., OPEU, POB 12159, Salem, OR 97309 by 6-15; EOE

LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE: Performs professional union work. Responsible for representing individuals, groups of workers and the local before the state, its offices, local governments and private employers. Organizes in the private and public sectors. Performs contract negotiations and related work as required. Interested candidates should send a résumé to: CWA Local 1032, 900 Brunswick Ave., Trenton, NJ 08638, Attn: Personnel Committee.

UNION ORGANIZERS: National labor union seeks organizing directors/lead organizers to perform a central role in building a progressive industrial union. Must be able to recruit, train and direct the work of other organizers in large campaigns or regional organizing programs. Minimum two

years' organizing experience with a solid record of helping workers to form unions. Must be willing to relocate or travel. Salary negotiable, excellent fringe benefits. Send résumé to OCAW-SPD, P.O. Box 281200, Lakewood, CO 80228.

ORGANIZERS NEEDED. Progressive union seeks experienced organizers, various locations nationwide, with long-term commitment to labor. Send work history, personal profile, references to Bob Kinsley, UE, 2400 Oliver Building, 535 Smithfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2322.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Wisconsin Coordinating Council on Nicaragua (WCCN), a 10-year-old educational non-profit. Qualifications: strong interpersonal and leadership skills, outstanding communication and organizational skills, non-profit and financial management experience, knowledge of Nicaragua and developing world, commitment to peace, justice and equitable development. Must speak Spanish. For job description, send let-

ter of interest and résumé to: Search Committee, WCCN, P.O. Box 1534, Madison, WI 53701. Deadline June 11.

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publication containing more than 200 new job listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists, profiles of non-profit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: ACCESS, 50 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, (617) 720-5627.

► PUBLICATIONS

THE OLD FART: A magazine for and by curmudgeons. Send \$10 cheque for a one-year subscription to this

Barricada Internacional
Monthly news and analysis
straight from Nicaragua.
Sample free! \$30.00/year.
Barricada-I, PO Box
410150 SF, CA 94141

quarterly publication to: Box 83509, 199 Avenue Rd. Toronto, Canada M5R 3S2 (Tel/FAX 416-975-2614) or send \$20, one for yourself and one for your favorite curmudgeon.

"Flunk the DADS of Ph.D. Socialism." Free leaflet. Write DDEC, P.O. Box 3744-T, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49501-3744.

"WALKABOUT," a mixed bag of anecdotes, articles and advice for independent travelers. Sample \$4. Year subscription (bimonthly), \$12, P.O. Box 5143, Portsmouth, NH 03802-5143.

► BOOKS

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS, a national group, has been getting unattached people acquainted since 1970. Box 117, Gradyville, PA 19039. (215) 358-5049.

OUT-OF-PRINT bookfinder. Send wants: 2035(1T) Everding, Eureka, CA 95503.

CAXTON BOOKSEARCH. Box 220, Ellison Bay, WI 54210. We'll order or search any book, (800) 288-7724.

JOB SECURITY IN AMERICA, a book on how 60 people view life in a world where job security no longer exists. \$20. ABN 1190 Encinitas Blvd, #123F, Encinitas, CA 92024.

The Taking of the Waters

by John Shannon

A three-generation epic novel of American radicalism—Socialists, Communists, New Left. "Formidably good." —Clancy Sigal. "Moving." —Mike Davis. "I wanted it to go on and on." —Dorothy Healey. \$15.

John Brown Books
Box 2355, Culver City, CA 90231

JEWISH CURRENTS

June 1994 issue.

"Forward With the Peace Accord," editorial; "A Talk on Peace and Justice," Arthur Miller; Readers' Forum on Schindler's List.

Single issue: \$2 plus 75¢.
Subscription: \$20 yearly (USA).
\$25 (abroad; in U.S. dollars).

JEWISH CURRENTS
Dept. T, Suite 601
22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003

NOAM CHOMSKY ON VIDEO

Two-hour videos: lectures, Q&A.
Titles include: *Prospects for Democracy*; *Peace with Justice*; *Clinton's Vision II*; *Third World at Home*; *Totalitarian Values*; *Free Trade*; *New Interview*; *Pentagon System*; *Creeping Fascism*; many more.
Murray Bookchin: *Democracy*

Two-hour video \$20.00.
Transcripts \$6.00.

Check or money order to:
TURNING THE TIDE
76 1/2 Lincoln Ave.
St. Albans, VT 05478

Thomas Paine and the American Revolution

By Carl Shapiro

Address delivered at the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, New Rochelle, N.Y., Annual Birthday Celebration, January 29, 1969

This expressive, informative speech was called by Florence Stapleton, principal director of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association: "The best speech ever given at the Association." READ BY THE AUTHOR.

APPROX. RUNNING TIME, 25 minutes
Audiocassette - \$7.50 ppd. (USA)

INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS
PO BOX 102, Ridgefield, NJ 07657

► SPANISH

SPANISH, TOURS, Minicourses. ESCUELA AZTECA. Summer in beautiful Cuernavaca. \$220 each two weeks. Spanish: all levels. Tours: pyramids, revolutionary murals. Study with Professor Ross Gandy (*Mexico: Reform or Revolution?*). Aztecs, Mayas, Juarez, Mexican Revolution. Live with a Mexican family. Brochure. Call (52-73) 15-24-69, or write: Apdo. Postal 76-005; 04201, Mexico, D.F.

CENTRO MAYA de ESPANOL: Indigenous men/women-owned collective in beautiful Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, offers immersion Spanish/Maya language studies. 5 hours

daily individual instruction, complete R&B with loving Guatemalteco family—\$110 per week. Call (817) 696-3319.

► ORGANIZATIONS

PENDULUM CO-OP. Free help in finding information on any subject. Send SASE and requests: P.O. Box 24610, Baltimore, MD 21214

► FOR RENT

CHICAGO—SMALL OFFICE SPACE available for business or personal use. \$150/month includes utilities. Use of office equipment negotiable. Call Jim Weinstein at (312) 772-0100.

► PERSONALS

CONCERNED SINGLES Newsletter links singles concerned about environment, peace, social justice, gender equality, personal growth. Nationwide. All ages. Free sample: Box 555-T, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

FRIENDSHIPS WORLDWIDE! 300,000 members, 156 nations. Free details. International Penfriends, Box 516071, Dallas, TX 75251-6071, USA.

RUSSIA-SCANDINAVIA-ROMANIA-USA, etc. Correspondence for sincere professionals worldwide. Scanna International, P.O. Box 4-ITT, Pittsford, NY 14534. (800) 677-3170 anytime.

► MISCELLANEOUS

RADICAL WALKING TOURS—Learn the legacy of Malcolm X, Abbie Hoffman, Emma Goldman and more in N.Y.C. (718) 492-0069.

FIBER ARTS SUPPLIES: spinning wheels, handlooms, fibers, books, equipment. Catalog \$3. Fiber McGee's Closet, Rt. 3, Box 66, Richmond, MO 64085. (816) 776-2252.


VISION QUEST/WOMEN'S QUEST, Dakota Sioux Teachings, Drum Making. Antelope Retreat Center, Box 166, Savery, WY 82332. (307) 383-2625.

JEWS FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS. Information and catalogue: 225 Humphrey Street, Marblehead, MA 01945.

EDITING, WRITING, PROOFING, producing manuscripts, books, reports, letters. All subjects. Myers, P.O. Box 3764, South Pasadena, CA 91031-4764.

JOIN US TO BUILD HOME together: Semi-shared mountain spirit space, views, redwoods, meadows. 26-plus acres north of Santa Cruz. \$60,000-120,000. Financing. Box 983, Boulder Creek, CA 95006. Welcome Home.

FREE WORKER CO-OP PRODUCTS CATALOG, plus free help starting cooperatives. Send SASE to Pendulum Co-op, P.O. Box 24610, Baltimore, MD 21214.

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Friendly, Informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos, \$4.
 1210 Valencia #1T
 San Francisco, CA 94110

Imperialism, Inner-Cities, Activism, Feminism, etc...
Free catalog:
Real Books
 1518 W. Thorndale,
 Chicago, IL 60660

RARE VIDEO
 Discover FACETS VIDEO's astonishing collection of 20,000 foreign, classic American, silent, documentary, fine arts and children's videos and laser disks that you will simply not find anywhere else. Purchase or rent by mail. **FACETS VIDEO, 1517 W. Fullerton, Chicago 60614**
 FREE SAMPLER CATALOG: 1-800-331-6197

IN THESE TIMES Classified Ads Work Like Your Own Sales Force.

Word Rates:

95¢ per word / 1-2 issues
 85¢ per word / 3-5 issues
 80¢ per word / 6-9 issues
 75¢ per word / 10-19 issues
 65¢ per word / 20+ issues

Display Inch Rates:

\$30 per inch / 1-2 issues
 \$28 per inch / 3-5 issues
 \$26 per inch / 6-9 issues
 \$24 per inch / 10-19 issues
 \$22 per inch / 20+ issues

Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon, and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads,
 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ issue(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

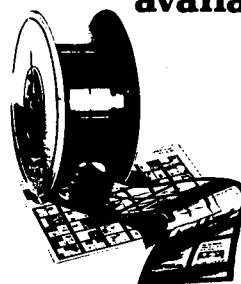
The Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, **FII - FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL** a quarterly review of minority and independent publications, includes selected articles from **IN THESE TIMES**. Produced by Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape. A 4-issue subscription costs \$5.

The Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc.
 640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217 (313) 842-1804

This publication is available in microform.



University Microfilms International reproduces this publication in microform: microfiche and 16mm or 35mm film. For information about this publication or any of the more than 13,000 titles we offer, complete and mail the coupon to: University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Call us toll-free for an immediate response: 800-521-3044. Or call collect in Michigan, Alaska and Hawaii: 313-761-4700.

Please send information about these titles:

Name _____

Company/Institution _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

**University
Microfilms
International**

Continued from page 40

makes a logical enough Virtuecrat; after all, he's made a career of hectoring others for their moral deficiencies.

But some others among the crowd may raise a few eyebrows. Oliver North, for example—who is best known, after all, for *failing* to exhibit much of the virtue of honesty, at least when explaining his actions to Congress. But, as his media adviser, Mike Murphy, has explained to *Newsweek*, it's more important to talk a good game about virtue than to exemplify it in your own life. "It's not the politician's own character that gets him credit," Murphy suggests. "It's whether he's willing to stand up and say there is a moral crisis—in illegitimacy, crime, education."

North, now running for the Senate, exemplifies what clearly is the prime virtue of the new Virtuecrats: certainty. As Lynn Rosellini notes in *U.S. News and World Report*, North brings a "zealous sense of mission to his Senate campaign." But zealotry is hardly an unambiguous virtue, if a virtue at all. "Anyone who thinks the Lord has raised him up to do special deeds tends to see his critics as agents of darkness, and North is no exception," Rosellini writes. "His world is peopled by saints and sinners, and he delights in pointing out the latter. Expressions like 'radical homosexuals,' 'militant feminists,' 'pro-abortion fanatics' and 'cultural elites' roll from his tongue like caustic kisses from the Lord."

Similarly certain is Rush Limbaugh, who in his latest book *See, I Told You So* celebrates "old-fashioned virtues like fidelity, chastity, sobriety, self-restraint, self-discipline and self-reliance, and responsibility." Tellingly, Limbaugh leaves "humility" off of his list.

But that's not the only virtue Limbaugh has trouble with. While Limbaugh helpfully provided a back-cover blurb for his friend Bill Bennett's book (describing it as "a superb collection, certain to fortify you and yours for a lifetime of morality, goodness and right thinking"), he doesn't seem to have read it very carefully. In his book, if not in his life, Bennett trumpets the virtue of "compassion." But Limbaugh doesn't even pay rhetorical homage to the notion: in fact, he devotes considerable time on his shows and in his writings to ridiculing those who speak too enthusiastically of compassion. In *See, I Told You So*, his only concession to the notion comes in the midst of a clumsily grandiloquent plea for lower taxes, arguing that people will naturally become more compassionate if they don't have to "fear that an excessive portion of their earnings will be confiscated." Silly me—I thought that virtue was its own reward.

Limbaugh's self-serving bombast suggests the degree to which the new talk of virtue is permeated with cynicism. There is clearly a double standard for virtue. For, say, the average inner-city teenager, the politics of virtue means little more than having to listen to a great many more patronizing speeches about the virtues of just saying no. The Virtuecrats, by contrast, don't even claim to exemplify the virtues they so righteously preach—yet they gain another opportunity to bask in the glow of their own presumed moral superiority. That hardly seems virtuous to me.



Subscribe to ITT!

☐ NEW SUBSCRIPTION.

You'll receive your first issue in 4-6 weeks. Please check price and terms below.

AST1

☐ RENEW NOW.

We'll extend your current subscription for as long as you like. This saves you worries about expiring and helps us save money and the environment by not sending renewal notices

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

MOVING:

Fill out old address above, and new address below. Allow 4-6 weeks for change.

NEW ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

☐ WHAT A GREAT GIFT IDEA!

(Just try and find a gift with more thought behind it. Fill out your name above and the lucky person's name here.) XSTH1

NAME OF RECIPIENT

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PRICES & TERMS.....

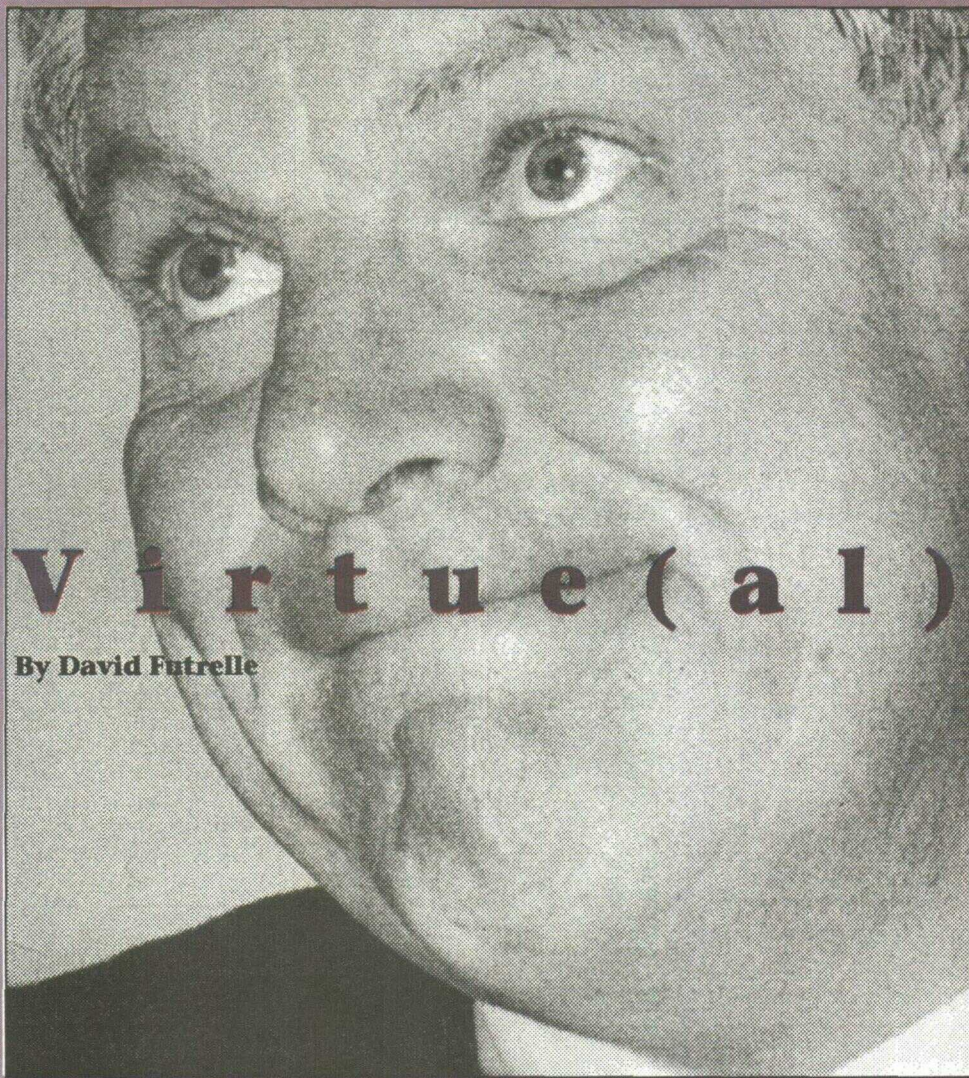
- ☐ One year, 26 issues: \$34.95 ☐ Six months, 13 issues: \$18.95
☐ Institutional, one year: \$59.00
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MC

ACCOUNT NUMBER / EXPIRATION DATE

Canadian orders, add: \$27.50 (one year), \$13.50 (six months) postage.
 All other foreign orders add: \$41.00 (one year), \$20.50 (six months).

Mail to: IN THESE TIMES Customer Service,
 1912 Debs Ave., Mt. Morris, IL 61054
 Or call: 1-800-827-0270

I N T H E E N D



V i r t u e (a l)

By David Futrelle

the virtuous life.

A bit of virtue may be necessary to keep us all from sliding into barbarism, as Freud suggested in his magisterially pessimistic *Civilization and its Discontents*. But we don't have to like it. And we don't have to celebrate it. I can hardly imagine a less inspiring ideal.

But virtue—or at least the idea of it—is making a big comeback. A recent *Newsweek* cover story heralded the rise of a new “politics of virtue.” Across the country, *Newsweek*'s Howard Fineman reports, Americans seem to be yearning for a revival of the simple verities of the virtuous

reality

life, “nostalgic for a more orderly age” in which “good character” was the highest social attribute. “And of course when politicians see a chance to play savior,” Fineman observes, “they're happy to respond.”

For once, a *Newsweek* trend story seems to be about an actual trend: A surprising number of politicians—from Hillary Rodham Clinton to Peggy Noonan—have

begun to talk fervently (if a bit vaguely) about the importance of Boy Scout virtues such as responsibility and good citizenship. Bill Clinton plans to hold a “character conference” at the White House; the Character Counts Caucus set up by Pete Domenici (R-NM) and Sam Nunn (D-GA) in the Senate is promoting something called the National Character Counts Week. I can't wait.

Bill Bennett, the former Reaganista drug czar and moral bully, is clearly the leading Virtuecrat, as *Newsweek* has taken to calling them. Last fall he released a hefty volume called the *Book of Virtues*. The book, a collection of morality tales and platitudes grouped under headings ranging from self-discipline to honesty, has since become a bestseller. Bennett, who now travels around the country giving lectures on good character,

Continued on page 39

Lime and cement dealers being initiated into the Knights of Pythias ... Farmers plowing sterile fields behind sad meditative horses, both suffering from the bites of insects ... Wives and daughters of Middle Western country bankers, marooned in Los Angeles, going tremblingly to swami seances in dark, smelly rooms ... Owners of the principal candy-stores in Green River, Neb., and Tyrone, Pa. ... Women with babies in their arms weeping over moving-pictures in the Elk's halls at Schmidtsville, Mo. ...

Such was H.L. Mencken's definition of “virtue.” And if his examples seem a bit dated today—the piece was written some 70 years ago—the overall portrait is depressingly accurate. There is something crabbed and pinched about

PHOTO OF BILL BENNETT © SHIA PHOTOIMPACT VISUALS